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## News Tracker ... What's new with old news

## States

**Plot to kill Bush:** A man accused of plotting with al-Qaida to assassinate President Bush has admitted his guilt on numerous occasions, an FBI agent testified Tuesday.

Ahmed Omar Abu Ali, 23, admitted "multiple times" that he joined al-Qaida while studying overseas in Saudi Arabia and discussed plans with the terrorist network to assassinate Bush, FBI agent Barry Cole said.

Abu Ali also discussed killing U.S. congressmen, soldiers and blowing up naval ships in American ports, Cole said. He said Abu Ali's confessions are corroborated by an al-Qaida cell leader in Saudi Arabia who surrendered to authorities.

Abu Ali, a U.S. citizen who grew up in Falls Church, Va., is charged with conspiring with al-Qaida to kill the president.

**Judge: Charge or free Padilla:** In a stinging rebuke to the Bush administration, a federal judge in Spartanburg, S.C., ruled the case of "dirty bomb" suspect Jose Padilla is a matter for law enforcement — not the military — and ordered the government to charge him or let him go.

Padilla's more than 2½ years in custody, most of it spent in a Navy brig, don't seem closer to an end, however, because Justice Department spokesman John Novacki said the government will appeal.

The government views Padilla as a militant who planned attacks on the United States.

**Brain-damaged woman:** The parents of Terri Schiavo asked a judge in Tampa, Fla., to allow the severely brain-damaged woman to divorce her husband — even if she dies — in one of a flurry of 11 new motions filed by the couple.

In the divorce motion filed Monday, Bob and Mary Schindler accused Michael Schiavo of adultery and not acting in his wife's best interests. The Schindlers have less than three weeks to find a way to keep their daughter alive before her feeding tube is removed.

**Botulism poisoning probe:** A Florida doctor who's recovering from botulism poisoning rolled a walker into court to face fraud charges for allegedly buying and selling the raw toxin in place of the wrinkle treatment Botox.

Bach McComb is accused of paralyzing himself and three others by injecting a potent, unapproved form of the botulism poison at an Oakland Park clinic last November instead of the costlier licensed drug.

McComb went to New Jersey for the



Prince Charles goes on tour: Britain's Prince Charles meets Red Cross volunteers in Negladay, Sri Lanka. The prince arrived in Sri Lanka early on Monday and visited tsunami-affected areas in the eastern coast before beginning a five-day, five-city whirlwind tour of Australia. On Tuesday, he visited a Perth, Australia, hospital where victims of the 2002 terrorist bombings in Bali were treated.

Thanksgiving holiday in November and was hospitalized there, then returned to South Florida to face the federal indictment.

## World

**Southern Thailand violence:** The Thai government has dropped a proposal to cut off funding for southern villages considered sympathetic to Muslim insurgents, an army commander said Tuesday, following criticism that the policy would only prompt further violence in the area.

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra announced the plan last month for so-called "red zone" villages in the largely Muslim provinces near Malaysia, over concerns the development money could be used by buy weapons to carry out attacks.

**Israel car bomb:** An Islamic Jihad militant told Israeli interrogators his group planned to detonate a large car bomb near Israeli targets, security officials said Tuesday, after troops discovered a vehicle packed with half a ton of explosives in the West Bank, the largest bomb found in four years of fighting.

The militant, Jibril Zubeidi, is the brother of a prominent militant leader in the West Bank town of Jenin, Zakariya Zubeidi, security officials said. Jibril Zubeidi, an Islamic Jihad member, was arrested two months ago.

**Alleged sex abuse by peacekeepers:** A United Nations report on sex abuse by U.N. peacekeepers will propose that suspects face court-martial in the country where the allegations against them were made, a U.N.

official said.

The idea is one of several being put forward as the world body confronts widespread allegations the U.N. peacekeepers in Congo and elsewhere had exploited the very people they were meant to protect.

They are accused of committed sexual crimes that include raping children, some as young as 13, and hiring prostitutes.

**North Korea ship ban:** Most North Korean ships will be barred from Japanese ports under a law that took effect Tuesday, a move that will slash trade as Tokyo ratchets up pressure on the impoverished communist country over a decades-old kidnapping dispute.

The law requires all foreign ships over 100 tons to be insured against oil spills, losses and other damage to enter Japan. Few North Korean ships are believed to meet the requirement, and some are billing the measure as economic sanctions in disguise.

**Lebanon new government:** Hundreds of protesters blowing whistles and chanting anti-Syrian slogans returned to central Beirut on Tuesday after forcing out the pro-Damascus prime minister, and Lebanon's president sought candidates for a new government.

About 400 people marched through downtown demanding the resignation of pro-Syrian President Emile Lahoud and the withdrawal of Syrian soldiers. On Monday, 25,000 flag-waving demonstrators demanded — and got — Prime Minister Omar Karami's resignation.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

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# 7th Fleet: Stepped-up drug testing

BY JULIANA GITTLER  
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — In the aftermath of a major drug bust involving sailors from the 7th Fleet ship last year, Navy leaders came up with a new approach to drug testing.

The fleet already used random urinalysis to detect drugs. Being overseas, where any crime can stain U.S.-host nation relations, the fleet tested more sailors than the Navy requires.

But, investigators learned, the random tests were more predictable than they expected. Sailors were guessing patterns to predict when testing was less likely. Others bought products over the Internet that promised to flush their system and reduce the likelihood of detection.

After the drug bust, officials decided to crack down and make random testing truly random.

"That ship probably saved us many sailors," said 7th Fleet Command Master Chief Ashley Smith. "A bad thing was beneficial."

Gone are the days of groups being tested at predictable times, such as in the morning or early in the month, officials say. Sailors now are notified at any time that their number is up — tests can be done throughout the day, in the evening or on weekends — and are led directly to a testing place where an observer makes sure nothing but urine enters the bottle.

"There's no chance for anybody to introduce anything" into the sample, he said. "We're sending the signal: 'You never know when I'm going to tell you to go do urinalysis.'"

The Navy began a zero-tolerance program about 15 years ago that dictates any drug use is grounds for a discharge.

In addition to urinalysis, the Navy combats drug use with educational programs to demoralize drugs and show the negative physical

## Positive results

Even as the Navy increases the numbers of sailors tested for drugs in the 7th Fleet, the numbers testing positive have declined, officials say.

In fiscal year 2002 there were 111 positives; in 2003 there were 82; in 2004 there were 51. Projected out from the first quarter, fiscal 2005 will have 44.

Among those busted, the most common drug detected is marijuana, which appears about five times more often than other drugs, said Chief Petty Officer Ernest Woodruff, the fleet alcohol and drug control officer. There has been a steady increase in designer drugs such as MDMA, or Ecstasy, he added.

Those busted are most often young, first-term enlisted sailors, although they come from any job or background.

Positive test results are found most often after a ship has returned to home port for a few weeks, not after stops in countries where drug use is common, Woodruff said.

— Stars and Stripes

cal and mental consequences of drug use, said Chief Petty Officer Ernest Woodruff, the fleet alcohol and drug control officer.

But fear of getting caught is most effective, he said.

"If they're using drugs, they're going to get caught," he said. "There is no room in today's Navy for people who use drugs. We have learned that the best detection is an aggressive urinalysis program."

In fiscal year 2004, which ended in October, the fleet tested 28 percent of its sailors each month. The Navy requires only 10 percent to be checked, Woodruff said.

In the first quarter of the current year, after the drug busts last year, the testing rate rose to 33 percent each month.

Newcomers entering a command are tested quickly, and entire units can be tested en masse up to five times a year, said Chief Petty Officer Kevin D. Fuller, urinalysis program coordinator for the 7th Fleet staff aboard the USS Blue Ridge.

Despite the greater numbers tested, the numbers testing positive have dropped — an encouraging sign, Woodruff said (see accompanying box).

The urinalysis detects any drug on the Drug Enforcement Administration's highest controlled-substance list. It also is a launching point for investigators. When one sailor comes up positive, investigators will question his or her friends and colleagues. One positive can lead to several arrests.

Navy investigators have become more proactive since the cases last year. Investigators already search ships for drugs; they now look for products associated with drug use, such as herbs that claim to fool urine tests, Smith said.

"We learned that sailors had access to a lot of products on the Internet," he said.

The testing process also is more carefully controlled now, Fuller said. After a computer generates a random list of names, sailors selected are told almost immediately and led to the test site.

They can't drink water to influence the results or sneak a substitute urine sample into the testing area. They're escorted by a master-at-arms and carefully observed providing the sample.

The strict procedures and severe approach to drug prevention is not a sign things are worse than in the past, Smith said. They're extra precautions to keep the Navy from losing its sailors.

"We don't want them to fail," he said. "If people believe they'll get caught they might decide it's not worth the chance. You don't ever know if, when you come to work, you'll have to pee in a bottle."

Hana Kusumoto contributed to this report.

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## Drug policy backed with prosecution

According to Navy spokesmen and investigators, several drug cases have been prosecuted on 7th Fleet ships based in Yokosuka in the past several months.

In mid-2004, seven sailors aboard the USS Vincennes were convicted of drug violations.

Late last year, 14 sailors from the USS Chancellorsville were charged, although some of those cases are pending. One sailor was arraigned on charges of possessing and using Ecstasy and the feline tranquilizer ketamine, obstructing justice and intimidating a witness. He will be tried in a court-martial next month.

In this year, seven sailors assigned to the USS Kitty Hawk were charged with drug possession. Six were reduced in rank, received 45 days of restriction and extra duties and forfeited half a month's pay for two months. One sailor received 12 months' confinement, reduction in rate to E-1, forfeiture of two-thirds pay for 12 months and a bad-conduct discharge.

Japanese police also have made some arrests, according to the Navy, but have not formally turned the cases over to Navy investigators or charged the individuals.

There are more than 12,000 sailors assigned to the fleet, Navy officials say.

— Stars and Stripes

# 31st MEU troops on way home after 6 months in Iraq

Stars and Stripes

Marines and sailors of the Okinawa-based 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit boarded three ships of the Sasebo, Japan-based USS Essex Amphibious Readiness Group and began their voyage home from the Middle East on Monday.

The trip back to Okinawa will take about four weeks, according to a 31st MEU news release.

The MEU's 2,200 members served in Iraq from last September to February, when the unit was assigned to the 1st Marine Division, 1 Marine Expeditionary Force. It was responsible primarily for conducting security and stabilization operations in the 33,000-square-mile U.S. area of operation in the Al Anbar province.

It also conducted a wide range of missions, including assistance and security for Iraq's elections, cordon and limited-scale raids against insurgents, civil affairs missions, border security and training of Iraqi Security Forces.

Roughly 2,300 sailors make up the crews of the Essex, the USS Iwo Jima and the USS Harpers Ferry, which left Sasebo in August to transport the Marines, along with their vehicles and equipment, to Kuwait, where the MEU disembarked before heading into Iraq. The three ships have been operating in the Persian Gulf since September in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The Essex diverted to Indonesia in Janu-



**J.D. CRESS/Courtesy of the U.S. Marine Corps**  
Marines and sailors of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit board a Landing Craft Utility for transport to the Essex Amphibious Ready Group on Monday in preparation for the unit's return from Iraq to its home base on Okinawa.

ary to assist in the humanitarian effort to the victims of the Dec. 26 tsunami. It returned to the Persian Gulf to pick up Marines before heading for Sasebo.

Two hundred and twenty-one Marines and sailors from the 31st MEU were

wounded during the deployment, the Marine release stated, and 50 were killed, including 27 who died in the Jan. 26 crash of a CH-53 helicopter near Ar Rutbah.

The MEU is composed of a ground combat element, Battalion Landing Team, 1st

Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment (which lost the 27 in the crash); an aviation combat element, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 265 (Reinforced), a service support element, MEU Service Support Group 31; and the MEU command element. All are based on Okinawa except the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment. The 900 members of that battalion are based at Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, and are due to return there from Okinawa in April.

"The 31st MEU is looking forward to returning to Okinawa," spokesman Capt. Burrell D. Palmer stated in the release. "Although we are preparing to head home for a much-deserved rest and to share time missed with our loved ones, we must continue to be ready to serve as America's 911 force in the western Pacific."

The 31st MEU's commanding officer, Col. W. Lee Miller, praised the unit for its performance while in Iraq.

"The Marines and sailors of the 31st MEU have carved their names into the history books," Miller stated in a Feb. 28 release. "I could not be any prouder to have led them during Operation Iraqi Freedom and in supporting Iraq's first free elections. The continuous cycles of training in the Asia-Pacific region had prepared us for such an operation and the MEU completed its tasks successfully."

# Army to put 19,000 E-4s on promotion list

BY LISA BURGESS

Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — The Army has a shortage of active-duty sergeants and a plan to fix the problem.

On Thursday, 19,000 qualified corporals and specialists will automatically be placed on the promotion list for sergeant, instead of having to wait for a commander to recommend them for advancement to that rank.

Army leaders decided to change the way soldiers reach the noncommissioned officer ranks because of a chronic shortage, according to retired Sgt. Maj. Gerald Purcell, the Army's personnel policy integrator for enlisted professional development.

The Army currently needs about 1,500 more sergeants from 31 specialties.

Purcell said the reasons for the sergeant shortage include an "insatiable appetite" for E-5s due to the ongoing active-duty end-strength increase of 30,000 soldiers.

At the same time, "the number of eligi-

ble specialists who are on a promotion list have dwindled to the point where we can't fill all the sergeant requirements," Purcell said Tuesday.

Advancement through the pay grades E-1 (private) through E-4 (corporal or specialist) is automatic, based on time in service and time in grade.

The Army also has a minimum requirement for promotion to E-5, or sergeant, and entry into the ranks of noncommissioned officers, or NCOs, who have leadership roles.

That minimum is 48 months in service and 12 months in grade, and an absence of negatives in their personnel record.

But until now, soldiers who hoped to move to the E-5 level also needed a commander's recommendation to go before a promotions board of senior NCOs.

If the board approves the recommendation, soldiers are awarded points for a variety of skills and achievements. The minimum number of points a soldier needs to qualify for promotion to E-5 is 350, while the maximum score is 800.

The higher the total score, the more likely an E-4 is to get one of the sergeant slots, whose number varies each month and by Military Occupational Specialty.

But commanders are recommending only 10 percent of all eligible soldiers, Purcell said.

The problem, he said, is that many unit commanders believe that soldiers should meet higher standards than the Army's minimum before they are ready to assume leadership duties.

"The notion that you have to be fully ready to be a sergeant is a bad notion," Purcell said. "I'll tell you, if that were true, I'd never have been promoted."

The new policy, which begins Thursday, "is really a forcing mechanism to get soldiers in a promotable status to satisfy requirements, but it keeps the chain of command fully involved in that entire process," Purcell said.

From now on, soldiers will automatically be placed on the E-5 promotion list, with a

score of 350 points, as long as they meet the minimum requirements.

That means that 9,000 duty soldiers who otherwise would not have been eligible for sergeant's stripes will go on the March list, Purcell said.

But that does not mean those 19,000 troops will get promoted.

Unit commanders will get a copy of the new list, and will have 15 days to strike any of their soldiers they believe should not be promoted, Purcell said.

Even if they stay on the list, those soldiers who made it automatically are limited to 350 points, which in most MOSs is nowhere near enough to be competitive, Purcell said.

If soldiers want a higher score, they have to go through the normal board process, Purcell said.

But for MOSs with severe shortages, soldiers with 350 points could be promoted.

For a list of the first MOSs to be affected by the new policy, go to [www.stripes.com](http://www.stripes.com).

E-mail Lisa Burgess at: [burgess@stripes.osd.mil](mailto:burgess@stripes.osd.mil)

## Girl Scout leader, volunteers honored

BY JULIANA GITTLER

Stars and Stripes

A Kanto-area scout leader and two troops earned national Girl Scouts awards in February at the 2005 Girl Scouts Overseas-Western Pacific Winter Conference in Tokyo.

Camp Zama chairman Cindy Streton earned the Appreciation Pin, a national Girl Scout organization award that recognizes individuals who exceed expectations for the positions they hold, according to a Girl Scouts press release.

According to the organization, Streton earned the Appreciation Pin by motivating volunteers and serving as a positive role model for Scouts.

She upheld the Girl Scout Promise and Law and fostered a better

relationship with Japanese sister troops.

Streton manages six troops at Camp Zama.

The overseas committees at Camp Zama and Yokota Air Base both earned President's Awards recognizing the group's achievements.

The overseas committees consist of volunteers who manage a group at a base or installation.

This was the first time the President's Award was issued to a Western Pacific region, according to a Scout press release.

To earn the award, the volunteers helped their chapters reach or surpass certain membership goals and retained three-fourths of the volunteer leaders who did not transfer.

The organization's board of directors chooses the winners.



JIM SCHULZ/Stars and Stripes

Girl Scouts Dana Hughes, Nichole Mullis and Kyle Henry from Troop 60 in Osan, South Korea, stroll down Takahashi Street in Harajuku, Japan, during a "Girls' Night Out" on Feb. 18. The Girl Scouts were in Japan attending seminars and workshops during the Annual Girl Scout Winter Training Conference in Tokyo.

The honors were handed out at the group's Winter Conference, a convention that focuses on career development, stress management and other life skills.

About 200 participants attended from military bases around the region.

E-mail Juliana Gittler at: [gittlerj@stripes.osd.mil](mailto:gittlerj@stripes.osd.mil)

## Call to adventure

CAMP ZAMA, Japan — Adventurers from around the Kanto Plain are invited to an Adventure Fair at Camp Zama from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday.

The fair, spread throughout the Zama Community Club, will include information booths, food, special events and prizes from base and local organizations, including Japan Underwater Explorers.

Call the club at DSN 263-4133 for more information.

## Young photogs contest

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — Budding photographers will display their work at the Image-Maker National Photography Exhibit from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday in the School-Age Care Center, Building H-20.

Works of young photographers from Yokosuka, Negishi and Ikego will be judged. Winners of the local contest, sponsored by the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, will move up to an Asian regional competition and a national competition at the Boys & Girls Clubs of America headquarters in Atlanta.

## St. Patrick's parade

CAMP ZAMA, Japan — The U.S. Army Japan band will perform as part of the Yokohama St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 12.

The parade will run from 1 to 7 p.m. in Motomachi, Yokohama.

Call DSN 263-5709 for more information.

From staff reports

## Kitty Hawk sailor detained in Hong Kong

Stars and Stripes

A USS Kitty Hawk sailor was believed to be in police custody in Hong Kong on Tuesday, accused of assaulting a police officer and a taxi driver Saturday during a port visit.

Navy officials in Hong Kong confirmed that a sailor is in custody but said they could not provide information on the charges or incident. Officials at the U.S. consulate said the

sailor is being treated like any other American in Hong Kong and is afforded privacy unless he signs a privacy act waiver.

According to Chinese news sources, the sailor or a taxi driver and a police officer during a drunken argument Saturday morning.

The Xinhua news agency reported that the 27-year-old sailor will be brought to court to face the charges. The court can decide whether

to turn him over to the Navy for prosecution or prosecute him itself.

The Yokosuka-based aircraft carrier, with some 5,500 people aboard, and the USS Cowpens, part of the Kitty Hawk Strike Group, arrived at Hong Kong on Friday for a port call.

In March 2004, a Kitty Hawk sailor died during a visit to Hong Kong. The sailor's death was blamed in part on alcohol, officials reported.

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# Group claims responsibility for Hillah attack

The Associated Press

HILLAH, Iraq — An Internet statement purportedly by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's al-Qaida in Iraq group claimed responsibility for the Hillah suicide bombing that killed at least 125 people, the single deadliest attack of its kind since the fall of Saddam Hussein.

It did not mention a medical clinic where the recruits had gathered when the suicide

car bomber blew himself up or a nearby market where a number of people were also killed.

It was not immediately possible to verify the authenticity of the statement. The claim, however, was posted on the Web site that has previously carried al-Qaida statements. The statement was also posted under the name of Abu Maysara al-Iraqi, the designated media director of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the leader of al-Qaida in Iraq.

In Hillah, hundreds of people inspected corpses at a hospital morgue on Tuesday, trying to identify friends and family who died in a suicide bombing.

Babil province police said another five people had succumbed to their injuries, bringing the number of people who died from wounds to 10. Hospital officials said more than 141 others were wounded in the blast, which targeted mostly Shiite police and National Guard recruits lined up for

physical exams at a medical clinic.

Monday's bombing in Hillah presented the boldest challenge yet to Iraq's efforts to build a security force that can take over from the Americans.

More than 2,000 people held an impromptu demonstration on the front of the medical clinic where the blast occurred.

They chanted "no to terrorism" and demanded that interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi step down.

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## U.S. report criticizes Iraq government for human rights abuse

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Serious human rights abuses occurred under the interim Iraqi government installed by the United States after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, including torture, illegal detention by police and forced confessions, according to a State Department report.

Though the interim government did reverse "a long legacy of serious human rights abuses" under Saddam, the report said that "corruption at all levels of government remained a problem" during the period and Iraqis continued to be victimized by police, courts and others in authority.

Iraqi officials were correcting these practices, the report said. It said the January elections and continuing struggle against insurgent violence had helped "create momentum for the improvement of human rights practices."

The report, in which the State Department assesses the state of human rights around the world, said that tens of thousands of peo-

ple across the world suffered last year at the hands of repressive governments, some of them like Iraq — friendly to the United States.

Under the interim Iraqi government, there were reports of local police and other government agents killing members of Saddam's Baath Party, a mother and daughter accused of prostitution and kidnappers of police officers, the State Department noted. It cited a report by Human Rights Watch that said "torture and ill treatment of detainees by police was commonplace."

The report, released Monday, did not address incidents in Iraq in which Americans were involved, such as the abuse of prisoners at Abu Ghraib.

Overall, the findings were similar to those in three decades of annual human rights reports to Congress.

"Freedom and the ability to choose one's government still elude many people and many portions of the globe," Undersecretary of State Paula Dobriansky said.

## Three-star general to take over Gitmo investigation

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — The U.S. military appointed a three-star general to lead an investigation into abuse allegations at the U.S. prison camp at Guantanamo Bay, clearing the way for investigators to question a two-star general who once commanded the camp.

Air Force Lt. Gen. Randall M. Schmidt takes over for Brig. Gen. John Furlow, according to the U.S. Southern Command in Miami, which oversees the camp in eastern Cuba.

The move would allow Schmidt to question Maj. Gen. Geoffrey D. Miller, a two-star general who commanded the camp during many of the incidents detailed in recently released FBI memos that complain of "aggressive" interrogation techniques. Miller was in Guantanamo from October 2002 to March 2004 and was sent there to get more information from terror suspects.

U.S. military regulations require that an investigating officer must outrank anyone who is interviewed. Furlow requested that a more senior officer be appointed.

From The Associated Press

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## Japan suicide probe

TOKYO — Seven bodies have been found in two cars in northern Japan, in what police suspected Tuesday were the country's latest group suicides.

Four people were found at an isolated mountainside parking lot in Nikko by police Monday night, Tochigi prefectural police spokesman Shinichi Hirai said.

A second car was found early Tuesday with the bodies of three people in Ninomiya city, about 31 miles southeast of Nikko.

Police found a suicide note indicating that they met over the Internet before committing suicide together, Kawakami said.

Charcoal stoves were found inside both vehicles and the windows were sealed shut with tape. All seven appeared to have died of carbon monoxide poisoning.

From The Associated Press

BY BRIAN MURPHY

The Associated Press

VATICAN CITY — Pope John Paul II managed to speak in two languages with a top Vatican official Tuesday in the first clear sign the pontiff was regaining his voice after throat surgery.

The meeting with Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger reinforced Vatican statements that the 84-year-old pope was making strides through vocal and respiratory therapy less than a week after receiving a breathing tube.

It also sent a message that John Paul may remain fully engaged in important church affairs from his 10th-floor suite at Rome's Gemelli Polyclinic hospital.

"The pope spoke with me in German and in Italian," said Ratzinger, a German who runs a powerful Vatican office that deals with is-



John Paul II

ward: The pope is rebounding and remains in control.

"He is well. His condition is improving," papal spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls told reporters at the hospital.

issues of Roman Catholic doctrine. "I am happy to say that the Holy Father is fully alert mentally and also able to say the essential things with his voice."

Ratzinger did not elaborate on what the pope said or how long he spoke, but his rare meeting with reporters strengthened the image the Vatican is putting forward.

Doctors had told the pope to rest his voice for several days after the Thursday surgery. He is now undergoing daily therapy to learn to breathe and speak with the tube.

The Vatican canceled the pope's Wednesday general audience, but there's been no decision yet on whether the pope will appear again on Sunday. The Rome daily *Il Messaggero* reported that the pope hopes to say "Gratie" or "Thank you," at Sunday's prayers.

The Vatican has offered few precise details on the pope's condition or given any idea when he might be able to leave the hospital.

But it appears likely his current hospitalization will be longer than the last: 10 days of treatment at Gemelli for breathing problems that began exactly a month ago, Feb. 1.

Some Italian reports suggest the pope could be under medical care until Easter — March 27 — even if there are no setbacks.

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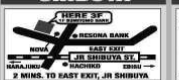
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# Moscow mayor hot over forecast errors

BY PETER FINN

The Washington Post

MOSCOW — Weathermen of the world, beware! The mayor of this city, where in winter — stop the presses — it tends to snow a lot, is furious that weather forecasts are sometimes inaccurate. And he has proposed fining the weather service every time it gets a forecast wrong.

"We are paying and would like to receive a quality product," thundered Mayor Yuri Luzhkov at a meeting last week of the city government during which a number of forecasters sat in the audience.

"Instead of that you are giving us [expensive]."

The mayor's hot flash was prompted not by a failure to predict snow, but by the Moscow Weather Bureau's inability in January to say exactly when a blizzard would arrive and how much snow it would dump on the city. On Jan. 28, the city endured its heaviest snowfall since record-keeping began in the 19th century, and local public services were unable to cope.

The storm snarled the city's already horrendous traffic, closed airports and forced pedestrians to wade through high drifts.

"I think it's very funny he gets so upset because we all know it snows in Moscow," said Larisa Stenkovskaya, 61, a retired engineer.

"But the mayor is obsessed with weather."

Officials at the weather service, which is funded by the city, reacted coolly.

"Meteorology is a science, but meteorologists never claim a 100 percent accurate forecast," said Alexei Lyakhov, head of the Moscow Weather Bureau. In an interview, "Punishing weather forecasters is not happening anywhere else in the world, but maybe we should think about

it. It's worth considering this idea of fining us if we also get bonuses when we get it right. And we get it right 90 to 99 percent of the time."

The mayor, however, wants perfection and has shown himself to be something of a control freak when it comes to the weather.

He created the capital's own weather service in 1999 after the country's federal agency failed to forecast a thunderstorm that knocked down trees across the city. The following year he threatened to fire forecasters when they flunked in predicting the severity of a snowstorm. He famously accused the federal weather service of "telling lies."

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## Man survives 8 days under quake rubble

The Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — In a near miraculous case of survival, a 40-year-old man whose house was destroyed by an earthquake was pulled out alive Tuesday after eight days under the rubble, the official Islamic Republic News Agency reported.

Almad Habibzadeh was found unable to speak under the ruins of his house in Zaranid in south-

eastern Iran. He was rushed to hospital in Kerman province, the agency said.

"We reported him missing to rescue teams, who went to his destroyed house and began clearing the debris," said Mohammad Khaki, a Zaranid resident.

The powerful quake of magnitude 6.4 killed 612 and injured more than 1,400 on Feb. 22. It leveled several villages and left thousands of people homeless.

## China angered by U.S. human rights report

The Associated Press

BEIJING — China on Tuesday condemned a State Department report criticizing Beijing's human rights record, saying the review was a blow to relations between the two countries.

"We are very dissatisfied with this report and we protest this report," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said.

"The United States should stop using double standards on human

rights and stop interfering in the internal politics of China under the pretext of human rights."

He added: "This kind of report will do nothing good for the improvement of bilateral relations. It will do no good to improve mutual confidence in each other."

The report, released Monday in Washington, said China continued to commit "numerous and serious abuses," especially against writers, religious activists, dissidents and petitioners.

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# Celebrate March with your Yokosuka MWR

## Officers' Club 243-5002

### Women's History Month

Now thru March 31

Ladies, receive free dessert with your lunch or dinner.

### Japanese Shogun Buffet

Wednesdays from 1700 to 2100

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March 19

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## Club Alliance 243-5951

### Name Tag Day

March 7 during lunch at Italian Gardens

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### Country Night with DJ Gary and the Waterfront Band

Wednesdays from 1900 to 2300

Don't miss the Country and Classic Rock sounds of MWR's newest house-band.

### Japan Jam Comedienne

March 24 at 1900

Share belly laughs with Janet Williams and Lahna Turner live in Sharky's at Club Alliance. Open to all hands. Followed by Latin Night with DJ Martha.

### Bingo! Join us at Club Alliance Every Saturday

at 1200 for your chance to take home grand prizes of \$2,500, \$5,000 or \$10,000 and a guaranteed \$1,000 giveaway for the last game. Can't wait till the weekend? Then join us at the CPO Club every Tuesday & Thursday at 1800 #1138

## Club Takemiya 246-8075

### Eddie Cotton Performance

March 5 and 19 from 1700 to 2100

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### Ladies Day Out

March 6

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### Country Night

March 15 and 29 from 1900 to 2300

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## Seaside Club 243-3379

### Women's History Month

Now through March 31

Celebrate this special month. Women, 18 years of age and older, receive a free non-alcoholic beverage with their regular menu dinner selection.

### Ladies Night Out

March 4 from 1800 to 1900 at Barnacle Bill's

Enjoy the evening with your girlfriends. All ladies will receive a FREE non-alcoholic beverage.

### International Women's Day

March 8 from 1100 to 1500

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## Negishi Club 242-4151

### Oriental Buffet

Thursdays

### Mexican Platter

Fridays

### Prime Rib Night

Saturdays

### Mongolian Barbeque

Tuesdays

### Pasta Pasta Buffet Night

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## CPO Club 243-5606

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# Intel: Bin Laden seeking to team with al-Zarqawi

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Osama bin Laden is enlisting his top operative in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, to plan potential attacks on the United States, U.S. intelligence indicates.

Al-Zarqawi, who rivals bin Laden as the nation's public enemy No. 1, has been involved in attacks in the Middle East but has not been known before to have set his sights on the United States.

The Homeland Security Department issued a classified bulletin to officials over the weekend about the intelligence, which spokesman Brian Roehrkasse described Monday as "credible but not specific."

The intelligence was obtained over the past several weeks, officials said.

The United States has no immediate plans to raise its national terror alert level, Roehrkasse said. However, the intelligence "reiterates the desire by al-Qaida and its associates to target the homeland," he said.

Bin Laden was in contact with al-Zarqawi within the past two months in an effort to enlist him in attacks, a U.S. official said on condition of anonymity.

The move may reflect the al-Qaida leadership's desire to involve al-Zarqawi in activities outside Iraq, the official said. Events in Iraq, officials noted, have limited al-Zarqawi's ability to undertake attacks elsewhere.

Al-Zarqawi is blamed for scores of attacks in Iraq and pledged allegiance to bin Laden and the al-Qaida network last year. Yet he has had differences with bin Laden, and his efforts are considered somewhat distinct from central al-Qaida operations.

Another administration official with access to the Homeland Security Department's bulletin said the intelligence indicates that al-Qaida has continued to encourage al-Zarqawi, who was born in Jordan, to get involved in terrorist actions against Americans outside of Iraq — including in the United States.

"The intelligence continues to be analyzed by the intelligence community and all appropriate information will be passed on to homeland security partners," Roehrkasse said. "The department has no plans at this time to raise the threat level based on this specific information."

In October, al-Zarqawi made a first-ever pledge of loyalty to bin Laden, by posting a message on a Web site. At the time, U.S. officials believed al-Zarqawi was hoping to appeal to a larger audience.

In January 2004, Kurdish forces in Northern Iraq detained one courier, Hassan Ghul, who was carrying a letter written by al-Zarqawi to bin Laden. In it, al-Zarqawi proposed trying to start a civil war between Iraq's Sunni and Shiite Muslims.

# Justices strike down execution for youths

BY HOPE YEN

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A closely divided Supreme Court ruled Tuesday that it's unconstitutional to execute juvenile killers, ending a practice in 19 states that has been roundly condemned by many of America's closest allies.

The 5-4 decision throws out the death sentences of 72 murderers who were under 18 when they committed their crimes and bars states from seeking to execute minors for future crimes.

The executions, the court said, violate the Eighth Amendment ban on cruel and unusual punishment.

"The age of 18 is the point where society draws the line for many purposes between childhood and adulthood. It is, we conclude, the age at which the line for death eligibility ought to rest," Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote.

The ruling continues the scope of the death penalty, which

justices reinstated in 1976. Executions for those 15 and younger when they committed their crimes were outlawed in 1988. Three years ago justices banned death sentences for the mentally retarded.

Tuesday's ruling prevents states from making 16- and 17-year-olds eligible for execution.

Juvenile offenders have been put to death in recent years in only a few other countries, including Iran, Pakistan, China and Saudi Arabia. Kennedy cited international opposition to the practice.

"It is proper that we acknowledge the overwhelming weight of international opinion against the juvenile death penalty, resting in large part on the understanding that the instability and emotional imbalance of young people may often be a factor in the crime," he wrote.

In a dissent, Justice Antonin Scalia disputed that there is a trend and chastised his colleagues for taking power from the states.

# Report blames guards for attempted prison break

BY ANDREW WELSH-HUGGINS  
The Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Unnoticed by guards in one of Ohio's most secure prisons, two death row inmates built a ladder from bedsheets and rolled-up magazines. They also managed to make a tool to break through metal fences and heard candy bars and water.

The planned prison break by convicted killers Richard Cooley and Maxwell White in February was thwarted at the last minute, when alarm bells sounded. But a report released Monday for the first time said the inmates had used a death row unit manager as a tip-off ahead of time by an informant.

The report, released at the request of The Associated Press,

said a complacent staff and "gross deficiencies" in supervision of inmates were responsible for the Feb. 5 incident at Mansfield Correctional Institution.

The report was issued by the state Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. Cooley, 37, is on death row for raping and killing two college students in 1986. White, 39, was convicted of killing a state highway trooper in January 1996.

The inmates fashioned a 13½-foot ladder from blankets and hid it ahead of time under a pile of snow, the prison system said. The ladder's rungs were

made of rolled-up magazines and newspapers.

When caught, both had water, candy bars, matches, extra clothing, an exercise mat and a homemade tool designed to break through fences, the report said.

The death row unit manager was tipped on Jan. 20 and Feb. 1 and told the prison's security chief both times, but the information was never passed on to the warden, the report said.

Eleven people are being disciplined, including a warden, who will receive a letter of reprimand, Dean said.



White



Cooley

## Man shot during 50 Cent appearance

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — A 24-year-old Los Angeles man was shot in the leg Monday night in the lobby of a Manhattan radio station while rapper 50 Cent was making an on-air appearance there, police said.

It wasn't immediately known how badly the unidentified man was injured in Monday's shooting, which occurred at WQHT-FM, or Hot 97, on Hudson Street, police spokesman Sgt. Kevin Farrell said.

Officials said he was taken to St. Vincent's Hospital and was listed in stable condition.

Police did not know if the rapper was connected with the shooting. However, Newsday reported early Tuesday on its Web site that the shooting oc-



50 Cent

curred shortly after 10 p.m. when 50 Cent, whose real name is Curtis Jackson, announced that he was dropping his protégé The Game from his hip-hop clique, G-Unit.

The victim was also said to be a member of 50 Cent's entourage.

50 Cent, who was at the station promoting the Thursday release of his new album "The Massacre," was not harmed in the incident.

No arrests had been made; however, police are continuing to investigate the incident.

## Tourist dies after jumping from boat

HONOLULU — A tourist on a whale-watching cruise died Monday after jumping into the ocean about half a mile off Magic Island, authorities said.

The 22-year-old Japanese man leaped off the boat, the American Dream, while the tour boat was stationary, observing a pair of whales about 125 yards away, owner Dream Cruises said. He was pronounced dead at Straub Clinic & Hospital.

The man's name was being withheld until his family is notified, the company said.

One of two crew members who went into the water in an effort to save the man was slightly injured. They were in the water 10 minutes before the ship circled and picked them up.

"All of us at Dream Cruises are shocked and deeply saddened by this tragic event, and our hearts go out to this man's family," company president Mike Watson said.

## Lighters now banned from U.S. flights, airports

WASHINGTON — Airline passengers can no longer bring cigarette lighters onto planes or in any secure areas, the Homeland Security Department announced.

Lighters were added to the prohibited items list because of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act, which President Bush signed on Dec. 17.

The Transportation Security Administration, the agency charged with prohibiting dangerous items on aircraft, said Monday that lighters will be banned from planes and areas beyond security checkpoints at airports.

The TSA said butane, absorbed-fuel (Zippo-type), electric/battery-powered and novelty lighters were included in the ban.

The rule will be enforced beginning April 14.

From The Associated Press

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# Michael Jackson's defense attacks case

BY TIM MOLLOY

The Associated Press

SANTA MARIA, Calif. — Authorities investigating allegations of child molestation against Michael Jackson found no DNA from his accuser when they searched the pop star's bedroom, his attorney told the jury Tuesday.

The lack of such evidence shows the molestation claims are false, Thomas Mesereau Jr. said as he continued an opening statement countering the case laid out by District Attorney Tom Sneddon on Monday.

The trial was expected to move into testimony later in the day, with the prosecution

calling British journalist Martin Bashir. He made the documentary "Living With Michael Jackson," in which Jackson held hands with the then-13-year-old boy who eventually accused him and in which the pop star said he let children sleep in his bed.

Bashir, who has fought the prosecution's plan to put him on the stand, arrived at court accompanied by lawyers.

Mesereau also attacked the credibility of the accuser's mother and depicted the alleged victim, now 15, and his brother as troublemakers while at Jackson's Neverland ranch, where the molestation allegedly occurred.

The defense attorney also addressed allegations that Jackson showed sexually explicit images and gave alcohol to his accuser and his brother.

Mesereau said the children were sometimes "out of control" at Neverland and read Jackson's magazines and broke into his alcohol without his permission.

"Mr. Jackson will freely admit that he does read girls' magazines from time to time," Mesereau said. "He absolutely does not show them to children."

In his opening statement, Sneddon said Jackson gave his accuser alcohol to make him more susceptible to molestation, and explicit magazines were found with the ac-

cuser's fingerprints and that one magazine had the fingerprints of Jackson and the accuser.

Mesereau offered a possible explanation for that, saying Jackson once caught the boy reading his magazines and took them away and locked them in a briefcase.

The boys also memorized security codes and codes used to start amusement park rides at Neverland, so they had the run of the ranch when Jackson was away and could get into Jackson's bedroom without permission, Mesereau said.

Of the alcohol allegations, Mesereau said the boys "were caught intoxicated, they were caught with bottles. Mr. Jackson was nowhere around."

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**USA EAST COAST \$845** ~ 4/1-4/14 MON-FRI

**MANILA \$699** ~ 4/1-4/26

**HONG KONG \$759** ~ 4/1-4/22

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## YOUR MONEY

# MILITARY UPDATE

## Congress may enforce VA fees in near future

Tom Philpott

### Enrollment expenses of \$230 will effect 2.4 million vets

Republican majorities on the House and Senate veterans' affairs committees have voted to impose an enrollment fee of at least \$230 a year on 2.4 million veterans — one of every three now eligible to use VA health care.

Those targeted are in priority categories 7 and 8, meaning they are neither poor nor suffering from service-connected disabilities. Half of the 2.4 million used the VA health system last year.

The Bush administration proposed the enrollment fee to hold down costs. The VA committees rejected another Bush proposal to raise co-payments on VA-filled prescriptions for these same priority 7 and 8 veterans.

While both committees endorsed enrollment fees, differences emerged. The Senate panel, chaired by Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, embraced the Bush plan for a straight \$250 annual fee. The House committee, chaired by Rep. Steve Buyer, R-Ind., voted

to set the fee for Priority 7 enrollees at \$230, matching the enrollment fee of under-65 military retirees using Tricare Prime, the military managed care program. For Priority 8 veterans, Buyer proposes a sliding scale fee, of \$230 to \$500, depending upon income.

Both Craig and Buyer, in separate letters to their budget committees, said difficult choices have to be made this year, given a tight VA budget and the number of new veterans returning from war with severe injuries. Against that backdrop, they defended an enrollment fee as the stiffest criticism expected from veterans' service organizations.

"VA must garner supplemental funding from some source, and there are no easy options," Craig wrote. To critics who say \$250 is not modest for some veterans, Craig pointed to the Tricare enrollment fee paid by military retirees who have at least 20 years. Shorter-serving veterans are no

less worthy, Craig wrote, but neither are they "more worthy as a class than military retirees."

Buyer wrote that Congress enacted in 1996 by voting to open VA health care to "lower priority, non-service-connected categories of veterans." Assumptions that such a move would be "budget neutral" were wrong, he said. So it's time to refocus VA health resources on the "disabled, injured, low-income and special needs veterans," Buyer wrote.

Buyer also said enrollment fees will "correct the inequity" between lower-priority veterans and Tricare users "who pay an enrollment fee and deductibles and who have higher co-payments." His committee "at this time" is not directing that lower-priority veterans also match Tricare deductibles and co-payments. But Buyer hinted he might return to those disparities in future VA budgets.

To comment, write Military Update, P.O. Box 231, Centerville, VA 20120-0111, e-mail milupdate@aol.com or visit [www.militaryupdate.com](http://www.militaryupdate.com)

More than 10,000 students tried to register for 1,580 available college entrance exam positions last week at China Academy of Art in Hangzhou, China. China has many job seekers, but soon it will have fewer workers supporting retirees than in the United States.

## Retirement-protection fears not limited to U.S.

The Dallas Morning News

WASHINGTON — If you think our Social Security system is heading for trouble, look abroad.

In much of the world, people are having fewer children and living longer. Japan is on a path where its retirees will equal the number of workers in 35 years.

In 45 years, there will be 10 retirees for every 7 workers in Italy. The United States will still have 32 workers for every 10 retirees.

Even in China, where there seems no end to the number of people who want jobs, there will be fewer workers supporting retirees than in America, thanks to its one-child policy.

All these countries are learning that leaving it to the young to support the elderly — a pay-as-you-go system like Social Security — is not feasible.

"We're in much better shape to confront the aging challenge than the countries of continental Europe or Japan," said Richard Jackson, director of the Global Aging Initiative at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. "But good shade is a relative statement."

The puzzle each country faces is how to increase retirement savings before it's too late. The alternative is higher taxes and lower benefits.

In Japan, taxes have gone so high — and young people have so little faith in getting anything from it when they retire — that large numbers of people are refusing to pay their retirement taxes.

More than 20 countries have created personal retirement accounts that let people save for their own retirement, usually while still paying taxes to support those already retired.

Results are mixed. Chile, which introduced private accounts in 1981, has seen generally positive results, said Estelle James, a consultant for the World Bank and the Dallas-based National Center for Policy Analysis.

But large numbers of Chile's self-employed and temporary workers don't participate. And many new retirees are painfully surprised to see brokers take 20 percent or more of their savings, thanks to compounded administrative fees. James said those fees may sound high, but aren't out of line with what Americans pay for their 401(k) plans.

## Cents and Sensibility

### Money tip of the day

## If your W-2 is missing

MarketWatch

NEW YORK — By now, you should have all the financial documents you need to file your income tax return.

But what happens if you're missing your W-2 or another of these important documents? It's not a tax break, reports the IRS. You're still expected to file on time. So here's what to do: First, call your employer's payroll office. Employers are required to mail out earnings information by the end of January. Ask when the payroll office mailed out the W-2s, and make sure they had your correct address. If the form seems to have been lost or route, ask for a replacement W-2. If you cannot secure a replacement

then call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040. Be ready to provide: your name, full address and phone number; your Social Security number; the company or employer's name, full address and phone number; and your dates of employment at that company. The IRS will then send your employer a "Not Received, Incorrect or Lost" form. You'll also receive a copy, along with a form 4852, a substitute for form W-2.

The form 4852 should be your last resort for a missing W-2. The IRS says form helps you recreate a W-2, based on information from your old paychecks and other financial records. You can download the form at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

## MONDAY'S MARKET SUMMARY

INDEXES					
	52-week High	Low	Name	Last	Net Chg
18,000.00	9,924.00	Dow Jones Industrials	18,000.00	9,924.00	-11.50
3,823.26	2,743.46	Dow Jones Transportation	3,823.26	2,743.46	+11.48
354.30	258.06	Dow Jones Utilities	354.30	258.06	+3.17
7,362.83	6,211.33	NYSE Composite	7,362.83	6,211.33	+5.58
115.5164	115.0474	AMEX Index	115.5164	115.0474	-0.46
2,191.60	1,750.82	Nasdaq Composite	2,191.60	1,750.82	+13.88
1,217.98	1,064.72	S&P 500	1,217.98	1,064.72	-0.49
576.32	549.29	S&P MidCap	576.32	549.29	+0.18
656.11	515.90	Russell 2000	656.11	515.90	+2.69
12,024.35	10,826.52	D. Williams 2000	12,024.35	10,826.52	-59.48

NYSE			AMEX			NASDAQ		
Most Active (\$1 or more)	Most Active (\$1 or more)	Most Active (\$1 or more)	Most Active (\$1 or more)	Most Active (\$1 or more)	Most Active (\$1 or more)	Most Active (\$1 or more)	Most Active (\$1 or more)	Most Active (\$1 or more)
Volume	Vol (00)	Last	Volume	Vol (00)	Last	Volume	Vol (00)	Last
East	10,554	80	SPDR	66,120	20.63	Microsoft	11,702	26.85
Nasdaq	1,000	1.07	Financial	1,000	1.07	Microsoft	11,702	26.85
East	1,000	1.07	Financial	1,000	1.07	Microsoft	11,702	26.85
Nasdaq	1,000	1.07	Financial	1,000	1.07	Microsoft	11,702	26.85
East	1,000	1.07	Financial	1,000	1.07	Microsoft	11,702	26.85
Nasdaq	1,000	1.07	Financial	1,000	1.07	Microsoft	11,702	26.85
East	1,000	1.07	Financial	1,000	1.07	Microsoft	11,702	26.85
Nasdaq	1,000	1.07	Financial	1,000	1.07	Microsoft	11,702	26.85

KEY DEFENSE STOCKS					KEY MUTUAL FUNDS				
Name	NYSE	PE	Last	Chg %	Name	NYSE	NAV	Last	Chg %
Alliant Technology Systems	28	17.82	23.95	+0.53	Fidelity Asset Growth	27.78	28.12	-0.12	-0.4
Boeing	28	17.82	23.95	+0.53	Fidelity Asset Growth	27.78	28.12	-0.12	-0.4
Boeing	28	17.82	23.95	+0.53	Fidelity Asset Growth	27.78	28.12	-0.12	-0.4
Boeing	28	17.82	23.95	+0.53	Fidelity Asset Growth	27.78	28.12	-0.12	-0.4
Boeing	28	17.82	23.95	+0.53	Fidelity Asset Growth	27.78	28.12	-0.12	-0.4
Boeing	28	17.82	23.95	+0.53	Fidelity Asset Growth	27.78	28.12	-0.12	-0.4
Boeing	28	17.82	23.95	+0.53	Fidelity Asset Growth	27.78	28.12	-0.12	-0.4
Boeing	28	17.82	23.95	+0.53	Fidelity Asset Growth	27.78	28.12	-0.12	-0.4
Boeing	28	17.82	23.95	+0.53	Fidelity Asset Growth	27.78	28.12	-0.12	-0.4
Boeing	28	17.82	23.95	+0.53	Fidelity Asset Growth	27.78	28.12	-0.12	-0.4

## EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates			
Japanese yen (March 2)	102.00		
South Korean won (March 1)	900.00		
Euro cents (March 1)	1.3607		
Dollar buys (March 1)	+0.7489		
British pound (March 1)	\$1.97		
Commercial rates			
Bahamas (dollar)	0.377		
British pound	\$1.922		
Canada (dollar)	0.714		
Denmark (kroner)	6.5145		
Hong Kong (dollar)	\$1.25/75.74		
Italy (lira)	7.788		
Japan (yen)	109.47		
Korea (won)	109.47		
Norway (kroner)	6.202		
Philippines (peso)	3.7502		
Saudi Arabia (riyal)	2.6757		
Singapore (dollar)	0.683		
South Korea (won)	1,008.47		
Taiwan (dollar)	1.3626		
Thailand (baht)	38.26		
Turkey (lira)	1,346		
United Kingdom (pound)	0.6775		
United States (dollar)	1.00		
United States (dollar)	1.00		
United States (dollar)	1.00		
United States (dollar)	1.00		
United States (dollar)	1.00		

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Korea (won)	109.47		
Norway (kroner)	6.202		
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Singapore (dollar)	0.683		
South Korea (won)	1,008.47		
Taiwan (dollar)	1.3626		
Thailand (baht)	38.26		
Turkey (lira)	1,346		
United Kingdom (pound)	0.6775		
United States (dollar)	1.00		
United States (dollar)	1.00		
United States (dollar)	1.00		
United States (dollar)	1.00		
United States (dollar)	1.00		

Source: The Associated Press, Bank of America









## Priest sentenced

**CT** NEW BRITAIN — A Roman Catholic priest from Poland was sentenced to nine months in prison for sexually assaulting a 17-year-old girl.

The Rev. Roman Kramsek was arrested in 2002 after the teen said the priest attacked her while counseling her for a prior assault. Kramsek told police sex was part of her therapy.

## Rabbit farms multiplying

**AL** MARBURY — Rabbit farms are multiplying rapidly across the South, and their products could soon be on the menu for Easter Sunday or any other day of the week as more people discover the lean, white meat.

"It tastes like chicken," said 11-year-old Brady Cox. "And you can fix it any way chicken can be fixed," added his grandfather, Wayne Powell.

Powell helps his three grandsons run the family's business on their small farm 20 miles north of Montgomery. They started in September with only a few rabbits. Now they have 500.

J.C. Holt, president of the Tri-State Rabbit Producers Association, said the organization began in 2003 with two members.

Now it has 248 in Alabama, Tennessee and Mississippi.

## Prank call alleged

**RI** COVENTRY — A Coventry fire department has begun an internal investigation after a firefighter was accused of calling dispatch and pretending to be the town council vice president.

Police say a Washington Fire District firefighter made the call, and it was recorded. The firefighter is not named, and it's unknown what was on the call. Richard Sanetti, the official who was allegedly impersonated, said the firefighter admitted making the call.

It's illegal to impersonate a public officer under state law.

## Grandparents sue condo

**FL** NAPLES — A southwest Florida couple is suing a condominium association with the help of the state, claiming a condo policy is discriminatory because they weren't allowed to have their grandchildren stay with them for a week or longer.

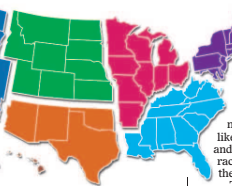
The state Attorney General's Office is representing Richard and Jean Quinn in their case against Windemere Inc.

## Jackpot garnishing

**NJ** ATLANTIC CITY — The New Jersey Legislature has passed a measure aimed at preventing gamblers who owe child support in the state from keeping big slot machine jackpots to themselves.

The bill would require slots operators to give names, addresses and Social Security numbers of major winners to the state, to uncover deadbeat parents and deduct what they owe before the jackpot is paid out.

Welcomed by advocates for children, the measure was criticized as onerous and unfair by a casino lobbyist. "We think anyone who



## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

owes child support should pay it, but having private businesses doing the state's job is just wrong," said Frank Fahnenkopf Jr., president of the American Gaming Association.

The law would not apply to people who win at table games or to those who win low-level slot jackpots. It also would not apply to non-New Jersey residents.

## Meth fears fuel food ban

**IA** MOUNT PLEASANT — School District officials want to ban homemade goodies for classroom sharing beginning next fall because of fears children will bring methamphetamine residue from their homes.

A methamphetamine specialist for the Iowa Department of Human Services said homes where the drug is produced may be permeated with toxins.

## Cold War relic must go

**ME** MOSCOW — It's a dinosaur of the Cold War: a 3-mile-long radar system designed to detect Soviet bombers screaming across the Atlantic.

The Over-The-Horizon Backscatter Radar, often described as the world's largest radar, was developed over 25 years for \$1.5 billion and occupies an area nearly twice the size of New York's Central



## Mom returns home

**Macy Furry, 8, joins her mother, Illinois National Guardsman Heather Furry, right, while marching toward the center of town in Paris, Ill. More than 5,000 people turned out to welcome home about 160 members of the Illinois Army National Guard's 1544th Transportation unit after their yearlong tour of duty in Iraq.**

Park. When operational, it could monitor a massive swath of ocean and warn of threats nearly 2,000 miles away.

Built in both Maine and Oregon, the radars picked up readings as far as 1,700 miles off both coasts. But like outdated warhead silos and other relics of the arms race, the military is scrapping the wire-and-steel monoliths.

The radar in Maine was operational for a mere year in the early 1990s before being mothballed.

## Self-defense or murder?

**PA** BETHLEHEM — A woman accused of beating to death her live-in boyfriend with a metal baseball bat felt threatened by him, her attorney said at the start of her trial.

Richele Abraham, 51, of Bethlehem, is charged with killing Dennis Wampole Sr., 56, on Dec. 21, 2003.

Abraham told police Wampole was abusive, and a psychologist will testify that Abraham "acted out of a perception that she was in danger, whether it was a reasonable perception or not," defense attorney James Connell said.

Prosecutor John Obrecht told jurors that Wampole was "laid down in bed, probably sleeping or trying to sleep, when Abraham killed him." "His skull was completely shattered into numerous pieces," Obrecht said. He said the killing was malicious and premeditated, and constituted first-degree murder.

## Destructive fire

**HI** KAHULUI — Maui fire investigators were searching for the cause of a fire that destroyed three stores in the Kahului Shopping Center.

Deputy Chief Neal Bal said there was so much smoke and heat damage to the remaining stores that he doubted they would reopen anytime soon.

A Salvation Army thrift store and Ah Fook's Super Market were initially destroyed in the fire that started in or near the thrift store, Bal said. The blaze was nearly contained when it flared up, jumped across a breezeway and destroyed TJ's Oriental Food Mart & Fast Food, he said, adding that flames briefly spread to the roof of the nearby Kahului Library.

## Conditions ripe for virus

**MA** FRAMINGHAM — The heavy snows and rains this winter could lead to an increase in mosquito-borne eastern equine encephalitis cases this year, according to officials who monitor and control mosquito populations.

David Henley, superintendent for the Eastern Massachusetts Control Project which covers about half the MetroWest area, said the mosquitoes that spread the illness spend the winter in their larval state, where they depend on moist conditions.

Ground water levels which keep wetlands and mosquito breeding grounds full are above normal this year, and soil conditions are extremely moist throughout New England, according to the National Weather Service's latest spring flood report.



## He's going to be fine

**Veterinary technician Octavia Bennett comforts a stray dog found with an arrow in its head. The young adult dog, tentatively named Easton after the brand of arrow, is in stable condition at the Cedar Animal Medical Center in Gallup, N.M. The arrow, which didn't puncture the brain, was removed and Easton will be made available for adoption after recuperating. A reward is offered to anyone who provides information that leads to the arrest and conviction of the individual who harmed the dog.**



## Learning young

**Young fishermen Cody Stock, left, and Tyler VanWatermolen, both 11, wait for nibbles on Lake Waconia in Waconia, Minn. Despite 50 degree temperatures, they fished through ice that was two feet thick.**



## Grace and beauty

**A great blue heron flies through the light of the rising sun along the Tomoka River in Ormond Beach, Fla.**

A great blue heron flies through the light of the rising sun along the Tomoka River in Ormond Beach, Fla.

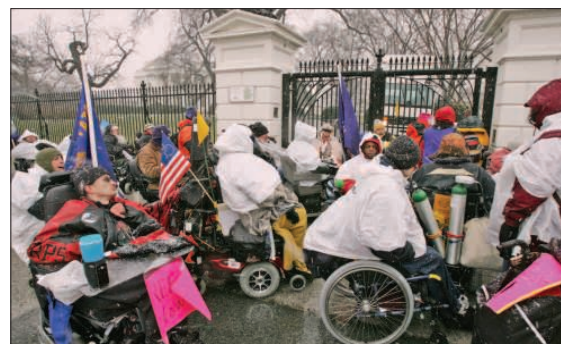




**'Gates' coming down** Workers take down some of the 7,503 gates that made up "The Gates," an art installation created by artists Christo and Jeanne-Claude lining 23 miles of New York's Central Park. The thousands of tons of steel, orange plastic and saffron-colored nylon fabric are to be recycled as everything from paint rollers and steel reinforcing bar to PVC pipe.



**Clearing the path** A North Carolina Department of Transportation snow-plow truck rumbles through downtown Boone, N.C., during a large snowstorm. The storm left about 4,000 residents of Watauga County without power.



**Making their voices heard** Members of the American Disabled for Attendant Programs Today block the gates in front of the White House during a demonstration in Washington calling for passage of legislation that requires states to provide alternatives to institutions for people who could otherwise live in the community.

## Unclogging route

**MA** BOSTON — Temporary ramps carrying Route 3 traffic to and from the Sagamore Bridge and bypassing the off-clogged rotary below are expected to be completed before Cape Cod's tourist rush begins on Memorial Day weekend, a state transportation official said.

The state broke ground on the \$58.2 million highway project replacing the Sagamore rotary in Bourne with a direct connection from Route 3 to the Sagamore Bridge. The rotary, built in the 1930s, exceeded its 40,000 daily capacity long ago and now sees about 90,000 cars a day. During summer, the rotary routinely produces week-end backup of 5 miles or more.

## Teen skier held in death

**WY** JACKSON — A Maryland teenager was charged with manslaughter after a fatal collision with a skier from Shrewsbury, Mass., at the Jackson Hole Mountain Resort.

Authorities would not release the name or hometown of the snowboarder, who also was charged with reckless endangerment. Teton County Sheriff's Sgt. Lloyd Funk said the county attorney would decide whether the teen should be tried as a juvenile or an adult. The manslaughter charge carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison.

According to witnesses, Heather Donahue, 29, was skiing slowly on an intermediate slope last week when the boy collided with her.

Witnesses said the boy was going very fast and had ample room to turn, but didn't do so. Donahue later died from head injuries.

## Path criticized

**NH** CARROLL — Snowmobiling is big business in New Hampshire's rural North Country, so it's no wonder the state has been trying to lure riders this winter with a new trail.

But the decision to run the path within 100 yards of a new \$9.5 million nature center and lodge in picturesque Crawford Notch is not sitting well with owners and guests.

"If you were going to pick a place that was going to be worse, you could run a trail right through a grade-school playground," Ann Isenberg said after a visit to the center.

February and March are peak months for snowmobiling, a \$1.2 billion industry that is a boon to area restaurants and hotels.

## Spawning giant fish

**MI** BAY CITY — The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will begin a three-year project to see if lake sturgeon, a species native to the area, are spawning in the Saginaw River watershed after a long period of decline.

The gigantic fish has been around since the time of the dinosaurs. The results will be used in efforts to rehabilitate sturgeon populations throughout the Great Lakes.

## Ecstasy dealer guilty

**PA** EASTON — Another person who has admitted to being part of a large Ecstasy drug ring pleaded guilty to drug charges in Northampton County Court.

William D. Hartman, 30, of Say-

lorsburg, admitted that he found customers for Duane Policelli, whom investigators said headed one of the largest Ecstasy operations on the East Coast.

Hartman faces a maximum of 62 years in prison when he is sentenced on April 1, defense attorney Richard Pepper said.

## Saving Civil War site

**SC** CHARLESTON — About 80 Civil War re-enactors camped on Morris Island, where black troops of the 54th Massachusetts mounted an attack against Confederate defenses, a battle recounted in the movie "Glory."

They were trying to draw attention to efforts to preserve the island, parts of which are up for sale. The group camped on the beach and then rowed 19th century replica wooden boats to nearby Fort Sumter.

## Abortion bill fails

**CT** WATERBURY — Officials declined to take action on a proposal to declare the city an abortion-free zone, a measure that would have banned the procedure in Waterbury.

Forty demonstrators in support of the proposal attended a Board of Aldermen meeting, where independent Alderman Frank Caiazzo proposed the measure.

Instead, aldermen voted 9-6 to place the proposal "on file," essentially killing it for now. The bill could be brought up again later.

## Community center plans

**HI** HONOLULU — The Salvation Army announced its plans to begin construction on its \$30 million community center on 10 acres in Kapolei within two years. The center, which will have a day care, swimming pool and theater, is expected to be completed as early as 2009.

The bulk of the funding for the center would come from a \$1.5 billion endowment from Joan B. Kroc, late wife of McDonald's restaurants founder Ray Kroc.

The endowment is earmarked specifically for the construction of as many as 30 community centers across the nation. Half the endowment must be used to build the centers, while the other half must collect interest and help support the centers' operation.

## Maryland may get slots

**MD** ANNAPOLIS — The Maryland House of Delegates voted by the slimmest of margins to invite slot machine gambling into the state, ending two years of opposition to Gov. Robert Ehrlich's signature initiative.

Passage in the House was viewed by slots advocates as a pivotal step forward for the star-crossed gambling initiative. But even as backers cheered the 71 to 66 vote, signs were emerging that their victory could be short-lived.

House Speaker Michael Busch, a slots opponent, said even a slight change to the House's version of the legislation would break the fragile majority that enabled it to pass. "The governor and the president of the Senate are either going to have to accept this bill or there will be no expansion of gambling in Maryland," Busch said.

Stories and photos from wire reports

# Horoscope

The word "deserve" is subjective. Some people perform great acts of generosity every day and feel they are worthy of only crumbs from the banquet of life.

Others do nothing and expect grapes to be peeled for them. Mars and Jupiter square off, encouraging us to consider our sense of entitlement. Is it balanced?

**TODAY'S BIRTHDAY**  
(March 3). You get serious about your No. 1 goal this year and will have what you want. You are also able to attain smaller wins along the way by sticking to your plan. Casual relationships don't stay casual. Early summer highlights a big commitment. Someone you hire makes a difference in June and July. Love with a Scorpio or Sagittarius is favored.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** You sometimes feel that if you're not acting against an opposing force, you're not working hard enough. But everything doesn't have to be a fight. Try compliance for a change. You may actually like it.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** There's something grand and melancholy about working alone, and you'll revel in it. You'll probably burn the midnight oil tonight, too — just remember, there is a point of diminishing returns.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** You'll have extraordinary insights while accomplishing ordinary tasks like cleaning up, making phone calls and clearing your desk. Get out in the world this afternoon. Your luck is uncanny. You could even win a raffle or lottery.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** No one wants to admit bad behavior, but your refreshing honesty drives you to do just that. You could find yourself defending the very thing only a fool would defend. You're in good company, though.

kind that involves being in love. Very grown-up behaviors are highlighted — this could include deep business, litigation or some lofty form of decadence.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)**

**Mathis**



Learning to do something creative with your hands (gardening? sketching? cooking?) will keep you out of the restless prison of tedium. Also, make a firm, regular date with someone you care about.

## LIBRA (Sept.

**23-Oct. 23).** There's so much to get done now that you'll wish you had your own staff — unless, of course, you do have your own staff, and then, you'll wish they were one-tenth as efficient as you are.

00000000000000000000000000000000

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** Cause and effect are clearly illustrated in your life. The more forthright you are, the more successful you'll be. Don't keep anyone waiting on hold — it's bad karma. Tonight features an eternally seductive temptation.

**SACITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec.**

**21).** You need a break from rigorous self-observation. Return to childish innocence by refusing to over-think your work. Also, make more time for "recess." Frivolous activities are lucky.

## CARRICORN/D-30-30-1-...

**19).** Though you can appreciate a well-told story as heartily as the next person, today, it's the facts you're after, not imagination. Ask direct and pointed questions, and you'll learn exactly what you need to know.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)**

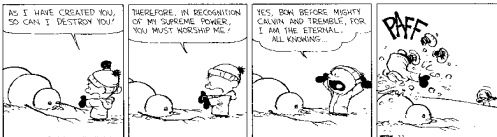
**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Avoid the (juicy) rumor mill! If you can take the high road, you stand to gain while others learn their lesson. On a financial note, you'll get access to the money once you prove you can handle it.

## FIGURE 10.1 10.15 10.20

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** Diverse characters delight and inspire you. You're to be commended for being able to relate to people of all walks of life. If you follow the golden rule, everyone gets along. Your connection with a Scorpio is particularly strong.

Creators Syndicate

## Calvin and Hobbes



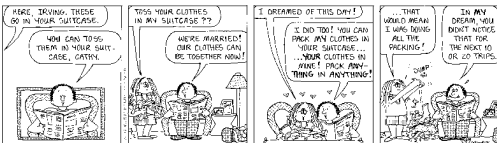
## Jump Start



## Zits



**Cathy**



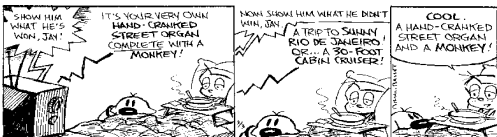
## Li and Lois



## Beetle Bailey



## Red and Rover



## Better or Worse



## Peanuts



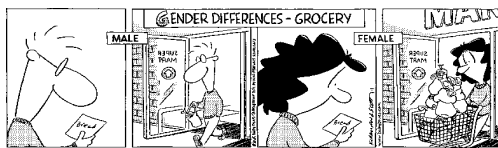
Fox trot



B.C.



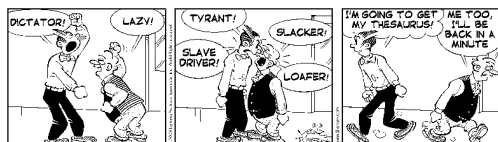
Baby Bites



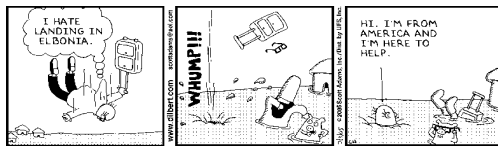
Spider Man



Blondie



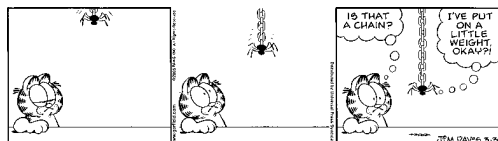
Dilbert



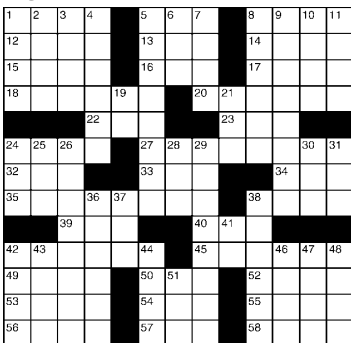
Hagar



Garfield



## Eugene Sheffer Crossword



## Across

- 1 Gift-tag word
- 5 Diastema
- 8 Detail
- 12 Mystique
- 13 Tree-ring tally
- 14 — Valley, Calif.
- 15 Crystal gazer
- 16 Curly's cohort
- 17 Writer Kingsley
- 18 — Roell (artistic illusion)
- 20 Tags
- 22 Lumox
- 23 Moment
- 24 Huck's craft
- 27 New Zealand port
- 30 — king
- 33 IRS employee
- 34 Shaft of light
- 35 Ascots et al.
- 38 Advantage
- 39 Prior to
- 40 Announcer
- 42 Will subject
- 45 Zorba's place
- 49 Lose weight
- 50 Mound stat
- 52 Streamlet
- 53 A handful
- 54 Flee the fuzz
- 55 Five carats
- 56 Basin accessory
- 57 The lady
- 58 Longings

## Down

- 1 Observe Ramadan
- 2 Contribute one
- 3 Hydrox rival
- 4 Woodchuck's kin
- 5 Competitor's countenance
- 6 Past
- 7 Rid of rind
- 8 Sherman's "Jeffersons" co-star
- 9 Hours-worked record
- 10 Olympic runner
- 11 Not even come close
- 19 Ma's mate
- 21 Send out invitations
- 24 Took off
- 25 Brewery product
- 26 Camera hogs rack it up
- 28 — "Lazy River"
- 29 Gin, for one
- 30 Kvetch
- 31 Turn red?
- 36 "Seinfeld" role
- 37 Drenched
- 38 Pep
- 41 On the other hand
- 42 Being, to Brutus
- 43 Lento
- 44 Grown-up elvers
- 46 Green acres
- 47 Family
- 48 "Desire Under the —"
- 51 "Sis boom baih"

## Answer to Previous Puzzle



## 3-3

## CRYPTOQUIP

Y ICCF PRIWF IQV KYVKWH  
CFCGMPZOH. RC PFF NZQR  
OMC GQQV KVCPOWVCH

RQVN IQV GCPZWOH.  
Yesterday's Cryptquip: IRISH SONG  
CONCERNING A FELLOW WHO ALWAYS SMILES  
WARMLY: "THE WEARING OF THE GRIN."  
Today's Cryptquip Clue: C equals E

# Consider kids' safety at hotels

**Dear Abby:** I work in a hotel where many people pass through our lobby each day and have questions, but we also get our share of strange or questionable people, too.

It's not uncommon for police to seek information or inquire about criminals of various sorts who stop over at hotels. And, for the record, it doesn't matter how posh the hotel is, either.

My letter concerns parents who allow very young children to come to the front desk alone, or to hang out in the lobby. I have seen scantly clad young teens in swimsuits walk by. These girls have no clue that they're being ogled by 40-plus businessmen in suits who make off-color comments about their bodies.

It's also not unusual to see 4- and 5-year-olds get on and off the elevators alone because their parents don't feel like coming to the desk to pick up items.

Why, then, do we wonder how our kids are snatched up so

easily by predators? Hotel staff are here to serve and be helpful, but we cannot serve as baby sitters. We are often multitasking, so no one should assume we have an eye on your child. How are we to know whether the 50-year-old man pulling your 12-year-old daughter aside and whispering something in her ear is her dad — or a pervert?

When children go missing, we staff members get screamed at by parents insisting that we should have seen something about the person the child was last seen with. Well, here's the simple answer: We're employed to conduct hotel business, not monitor children. When the telephone rings, we must answer and take a reservation. Our attention cannot be on your child when there is a lobby bustling with activity, a line of five or more guests checking in and out, something on the inside line requesting more pillows or ques-

tioning a bill, and our outside lines are ringing off the hook.

— **Frustrated at the Front Desk**

**Dear Frustrated:** I understand and sympathize. Part of the problem may be that the hospitality industry has been so successful in making guests feel at home away from home, that people forget they are NOT at home. An illustration would be a recent item on the television news here in California. An attractive young woman entered her upscale hotel and decided to dash into the powder room off the main lobby. She was unaware that a man followed her into the hotel through the lobby and into the bathroom. The only thing that saved her from his sexual assault was that another woman happened to enter the bathroom.

In the interest of safety, travelers should never let their guard down, and parents should remain vigilant.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles CA 90069. Readers can email Abby on the Internet at: <http://www.uepress.com/dearabby>  
Universal Press Syndicate

**Dear Abby**



# Tag-a-long cousin too much to bear

**Dear Annie:** I have been married to "Ricky" for several years. He and his widowed mother own a cabin in the woods.

Ricky and I work hard, barely seeing each other, and look forward to spending weekends at the cabin where we can rest and relax.

The problem is Ricky's cousin "Karl," who is unmarried and unemployed. Karl is the biggest mouth you have ever seen. He constantly drops by the cabin uninvited and intrudes on our time. If we have guests for the weekend, Karl assumes he is part of the gang.

When Ricky and I go out with friends, Karl finds us. He has never once reciprocated, brought anything or chipped in to pay for refreshments.

Ricky and I argue about this constantly. I have discussed it with my mother-in-law and have even told Karl directly that he should call first and contribute once in a while. It has made no difference.

**Annie's Mailbox**



I rarely go to the cabin anymore, and I leave if Karl shows up. Ricky says it's his mom's cabin, too, and she likes having Karl there, although he has never done a single thing for her in his life. I say we've earned the right to choose who spends time with us. Karl is ruining our marriage.

— **Marsha in Montana**

**Dear Marsha:** Obviously, it doesn't bother Ricky or his mother that Karl visits all the time or that he comes empty-handed. He is family, and they love him, which means they are not going to toss him out because he is a freeloader.

Decide how much this bothers you, because if it is wrecking your marriage, you are giving it more importance than it merits. The cabin is a nice getaway, but it comes with Karl attached. Look for ways to relax without going there.

**Dear Annie:** My three sisters and I are very close, and we want to take a vacation together, but there is one problem. My older sister, "Rhonda," has recently been ordered by the court to go to AA or she will lose visitation rights to her kids.

In spite of this court order, we happen to know Rhonda still drinks. We are concerned that if we take her with us on vacation, especially if the rest of us drink, she will get out of control.

— **Little Sister**

**Dear Little Sister:** Rhonda needs your support to stay sober and be part of her children's lives, but your plans should not be dependent on her. Maybe if she knew why you preferred to go without her, it would give her the incentive to stop. Please look in your phone book for Al-Anon, or call 1-888-4AL-ANON and ask how best to help your sister.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of Family Features' *Dear Abby*. Please e-mail your questions to [annie@mailbox.comcast.net](mailto:annie@mailbox.comcast.net), or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.  
Creators Syndicate

## JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

**TOIDI**

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**NIFSI**

**ARQUEV**

**PERUSH**

**Answer: A**

Yesterday's Jumbles: AIDED LAID WEAKEN AUTHOR

Answer: What the tipsy gambler and the dice had in common — THEY WERE "LOADED"

Now arrange the circled letters to form a surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

What the tipsy gambler and the dice had in common — THEY WERE "LOADED"

Family Circus

3-3

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Jeff and the Monks

"Can I go to Canada?"

WIN MANY THINGS DO I. HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT? INVISIBLE BLOWNIE IS JUST A SURPRISE...

Non Sequitur

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Win many things do I. Have to tell you that? Invisible blownie is just a surprise...

Non Sequitur

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Non Sequitur

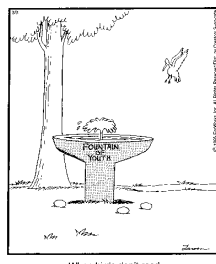


Dennis the Menace



© Gary Larson

The Far Side



© Gary Larson

The Far Side

When birds don't read



© Gary Larson

The Far Side













# FACES

## Usher, Alicia Keys win

Fresh off their Grammy success, Usher and Alicia Keys dominated the Soul Train Awards in Los Angeles, with each winning two individual awards and sharing the prize for best R&B-soul single by a group or duo.

R&B sensation Usher picked up the award for best male R&B-soul single for "Confessions Part II," as well as the prize for best R&B-soul album by a male artist for "Confessions."

Keys won for the best female R&B-soul single for her hit "If I Ain't Got You" and was honored for best female R&B-soul album

for "The Diary of Alicia Keys."

Usher also earned an award for best R&B-soul or rap music video for his work with rappers Ludacris & Lil Jon in the song "Yeah!"

## Producer praises actor

In his final days, Jerry Orbach refused to let cancer stop him from portraying police Detective Lennie Briscoe on NBC's "Law & Order: Trial by Jury," the show's executive producer said.

Orbach, who died of prostate cancer in December, continued to work even while getting chemotherapy every two weeks, **Walon Green** told TV Guide.

Green said he needed to make some changes to Orbach's final scene because the actor had weakened to the point where he could not speak in his normal voice.



Orbach

"He was down to a whisper," Green said. "So we had everybody else in the scene whisper."

Green said the 69-year-old Orbach refused to be written out of scenes when Green tried to lighten his workload.

## Accused Berry stalker

A judge in Santa Monica, Calif., issued a three-year restraining order against a man who allegedly sent threatening letters to **Halle Berry's** home.

Superior Court Judge Linda K. Lefkowitz ruled that Robert Sawyer of San Pablo, about 15 miles northeast of San Francisco, was to stay 100 yards away from Berry and to keep the same distance from her home, work and

vehicle.

The order, which expires in 2008, also prohibits him from contacting the actress by phone, mail or e-mail.

## Portman regrets scene

**Natalie Portman** says filming a kissing scene beside Jerusalem's Western Wall for her upcoming movie "Free Zone" was a mistake.

"I really don't want to offend anyone's beliefs or impose anything on anyone and it was mistaken to do it," Portman told "Access Hollywood."



Portman

The 23-year-old Israeli-born actress and her crew were confronted by ultra-Orthodox Jewish worshippers last week while filming the scene with Israeli actor **Aki Avni**. The incident undermined the sensitivity of the site, a remnant of the biblical Jewish temples, the holiest place where Jews can pray.

The site is controlled by strictly observant Jews. Male and female worshippers are separated by a barrier perpendicular to the wall, following Orthodox Jewish rules forbidding casual contact between the sexes.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

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# Suit against Romanowski by ex-Raider heads to trial

The Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Former Raiders linebacker Bill Romanowski ended Marcus Williams' NFL career two years ago when he ripped off his teammate's helmet and punched the second-year tight end in the face during a practice drill, Williams' attorney told a jury Tuesday.

During opening statements in the trial of Williams' multimillion dollar lawsuit against Romanowski, lawyer James Brosnahan said the linebacker struck Williams with such force that it broke the tight end's left eye socket with a "sickening sound" that could be heard 15 miles away.

"This case is about brutal violence beyond the rules of football," Brosnahan said.

Williams, who earned \$300,000 a season with the Raiders, is seeking damages of \$3.8 million for alleged battery, negligence and intentional infliction of emotional distress. The blow he took Aug. 24, 2003, injured his brain. His football career ended at age 27.

His attorney spent much of his 90-minute opening statement showing video highlights of Williams' football career, starting with his days at Berkeley High School, continuing through his college years at Washington State and culminating with his brief time with the Raiders.

Romanowski's lawyer, Jeffrey Springer, told jurors that Williams wasn't attacked from behind but actively engaged in a fight with his teammate. "They got locked up in mutual combat," Springer said.

Springer also suggested that Williams' lawsuit was motivated by money, and that Williams deliberately undermined cognitive tests done to gauge the extent of his brain injury by smoking marijuana.

"This case is about a payday," Springer said.

Romanowski, 38, known for fanatical behavior during his 16 NFL seasons, apologized publicly sev-



Romanowski

eral days after the altercation.

"I hold myself accountable," Romanowski said afterward. "It was a classless move by me."

Attorneys for Romanowski have asked the Raiders to pay for any damages the jury awards. "We're not responsible for what he did," Raiders attorney Jeff Birren said in a telephone interview.

Romanowski, released by the Raiders last March after failing a physical, has a long history of scrapes with opponents and others.

Williams played in 13 games as an undrafted free agent as a rookie during the team's Super Bowl season. He was used primarily on special teams but was trying to earn a regular position before the injury.

## Bucs' Dwight Smith charged with pulling pellet gun on fans

TAMPA, Fla. — Tampa Bay Buccaneers safety Dwight Smith was arrested early Tuesday and charged with pulling a pellet gun on two fans who approached his car while he waited in line at a McDonald's window.

Smith, a star in the Super Bowl two years ago, was inside his car with a friend at 4 a.m. when a woman in the car ahead of them recognized the player, the Hillsborough County sheriff's office said.

Two men in the car, Trevor Boyce Jr., 19, and Javier Joseph Jr., 22, walked to Smith's car and tried to talk to him, officials added. Smith became annoyed and drew the pellet gun but did not shoot it, officials said. David Roston, Smith's 26-year-old friend, got out of the car and punched Boyce, officials said.

Boyce and Joseph got back in their car and called 911. Deputies arrived and arrested Smith, charging him with aggravated assault with a weapon. Roston was charged with battery. Bail and attorney information was not immediately available.

# Report: More allegations of sexual assault at CU

The Associated Press

DENVER — Two female athletic trainers told a grand jury investigating the University of Colorado football recruiting scandal that they were sexually assaulted by an assistant coach, according to a report obtained by The Denver Post and KUSA-TV.

The panel's investigation also uncovered a "slush fund" financed by coach Gary Barnett's Football Technique School.

One of the women also said she was "coerced" to perform sexual favors for players and recruits repeatedly over a two-year period," according to the report obtained Monday. The woman said she was pressured to have sex with a recruit in a hotel room full of players. It wasn't immediately clear why the hotel failed to issue more indictments.

Money was kept in "16 or 17" cash boxes, with each managed by a different person with little oversight, the Post reported.

CU director of football operations David Hansburg "told the grand jury that up to \$2,500 could be missing, but not missing," the report says. "All funds were available to employees of the football program" and "all funds were given" to coach Barnett to use in his discretion.

Barnett told the grand jury that "the school received only income from the restrictions" (the "ball camp" participants), the report says.

The grand jury, which finished Monday Aug. 19, handed up just one indictment, accusing former football recruiting aide Nathan Maxcey of soliciting for a prostitute for himself. Former call girl Pasha Cowan has said Maxcey paid her \$2,500 for three call girls to visit "very young, very athletic men" at Boulder-area hotels, though Maxcey has said any solicitation was for him.

The report concurred with an independent commission's finding last year that players used sex, alcohol and marijuana as recruiting tools without the football staff encouraging or sanctioning it. But the report said, officials' denial of knowledge about the practices "demonstrates either conscious disregard of these circumstances or a lack of oversight of recruiting practices."

In a statement provided by the CU athletic department, Barnett said: "I am sure there are things I'd like to refute, but since this has to do directly with the grand jury investigation, I am bound by law that I would not discuss my testimony or anything that was discussed by or included in the grand jury report."

## Report: Lemieux likely to skip hockey world championships

PITTSBURGH — Mario Lemieux will likely skip the upcoming hockey world championships in Austria, but the player-owner of the Pittsburgh Penguins hasn't ruled it out completely.

Lemieux told The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette that it would be difficult for him to get ready for the tournament that runs from April 30-May 15 since he hasn't played this season due to the NHL lockout.

"I'm not sure it would be in my best interest — or in Team Canada's best interest — to have play-

## Sports briefs

ers there who haven't played the whole year," Lemieux told the newspaper. "That's the way I feel now. Maybe I'll change my mind, but it would be very difficult to play at that level, not having played the whole year."

Over 300 players joined leagues in Europe to wait out the lockout that forced the NHL to cancel its entire season.

## Skier Knauss banned 18 months for doping

OBERSHOEN, Switzerland — Austrian skier Hans Knauss was banned for 1½ years by the sport's international federation Tuesday after testing positive for the stimulant ephedrine.

The ban covers the 2006 Turin Olympics and could end the 33-year-old skier's career. Knauss has won seven World Cup races in 14 seasons and was a giant slalom silver medalist in the 2003 world championships.

Knauss' lawyer, Christian Flick, said he would appeal in an attempt to reduce the ban to a year.

"Our aim is still to get Hans back on the slopes as quickly as possible," Flick told The Associated Press. "Eighteen months is not the best solution," he has usually applied for doping cases.

Knauss had passed a possible two-year ban, but the federation doping panel ruled he did not act intentionally.

## Europe might select next Ryder Cup captains

LONDON — Ian Woosnam and Nick Faldo might be picked this week as Europe's Ryder Cup captains: the Welshman for 2006 and the Englishman for 2008.

The European Tour's tournament committee could make the unprecedented double appointment on Wednesday in Dubai on the eve of the Desert Classic.

Selecting both would be a compromise to avoid snubbing Faldo.

The 47-year-old Englishman is the most successful British golfer of his generation, with victories in six majors and 11 appearances in the Ryder Cup.

Woosnam, who turns 47 on Wednesday, is the 1991 Masters champion and an eight-time Ryder Cup player. He was an assistant to Sam Torrance on the 2002 European team and is widely favored to lead the team for 2006.

## Kuznetsova upset by wild card in Dubai

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — U.S. Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova lost in the second round of the Dubai Open on Tuesday, a 6-4, 6-2 defeat to Indian wild card Sania Mirza.

Mirza, who last month became the first Indian woman to win a WTA Tour title, is ranked No. 97. Kuznetsova, a Russian ranked No. 7, was last year's Dubai runner-up and had a first-round win in the first round. Mirza was the Qatar Open runner-up last week-end.

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# Spurs sends Gilbert out with familiar loss

The Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Gordon Gund's last game as owner of the Cleveland Cavaliers had a familiar ending: a buzzer-beating shot by a star player. A stunned crowd, a loss.

Duncan made a wide-open 19-foot jumper just before the final horn sounded, giving the San Antonio Spurs a 94-92 victory Monday night over the Cavaliers, who hoped to send Gund off as a winner.

Instead, Gund's finale as majority owner was painfully fitting.

During his 22 seasons with the Cavaliers, his teams were beaten by some big shots, most notably Michael Jordan's jumper over Craig Ehlo in the first round of the 1989 Eastern Conference playoffs for the Chicago Bulls.

Duncan's completes a vicious cycle. "We were able to take them down to the wire," LeBron James said. "That was a great effort for us."

Duncan's game-winning shot concluded a night that started miserably for the Cavs. In the first half, he missed his first seven shots and didn't score in the first 19 minutes. But with the game on the line, Duncan took a pass from Tony Parker, gathered himself and calmly knocked down his winner without a hand in his face.

"We run that play a billion times," Dun-

## NBA roundup

Duncan went 9-for-10 from the floor, finishing with 20 points and 11 rebounds. Parker added 19 points, eight rebounds and 10 assists — none bigger than his short pass to Duncan after drawing Cavs center Zydrunas Ilgauskas on a pick-and-roll.

"I couldn't make anything early," said Duncan, who went 9-for-28 in a loss at Cleveland last season. "I had some good shots and good looks, but nothing was going down for me. I was just going to stay with it."

During his final minute, San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich set up the play with Duncan as the first option. As it turned out, there was no need to go over any others.

"Tony ran it perfectly," Popovich said. "He was to look first to Tim, then if he wasn't open drive to the basket and make a take it to the rim and try to create or find [Brent] Barry in the corner."

Ilgauskas had 26 points and LeBron James finished with 20 points, eight rebounds and seven assists for the Cavs, who have lost four of five and are entering a tough stretch of upcoming games.

Manu Ginobili, who finished with 17 points, could have put the Spurs up by four points, but missed a pair of free throws with 15 seconds to go.

The Cavaliers called timeout after an inbound pass, Spurs center Rasho Nesterovic left Ilgauskas wide open underneath. James whipped a pass to Cleveland's big man, whose dunk tied it 92-92 with 14.2 seconds remaining.

The Spurs still had more than enough time to give their star a chance to win it. Cleveland's defense was late rotating toward Duncan, who had time to set his feet, measure the distance and drill a 17-foot jumper. The Cavs erupted onto the Gund Arena floor and swarmed Duncan.

**Knicks 117, Lakers 115 (OT):** Tim Thomas scored a season-high 35 points, and the Knicks recovered after blowing a 10-point lead in the final 46 seconds of regulation.

The victory was the third straight for the Knicks, matching their longest winning streak since 1954 and remaking themselves in last place in the Atlantic Division, but pulled within five games of the first-place Boston Celtics.

Kobe Bryant forced overtime by making a three-pointer with 4.4 seconds left in regulation, and scored 30 points with eight assists and five rebounds.

Michael Sweetney tied his career high with 19 points and grabbed a career-high 12 rebounds.

**Jazz 87, Clippers 86:** Mehmet Okur converted a three-point play with 17.2 seconds left, giving the Utah Jazz his second victory when Los Angeles' Bobby Simmons missed a layup at the buzzer.

The Jazz won back-to-back games for the first time in a month and a half.

With the win, Utah's Jerry Sloan passed Dick Motta for seventh in NBA coaching victories with 636.

Simmons led the Clippers with 17 points, including a tie-pointer to get Los Angeles within a point in the last 10 seconds.

**Mavericks 90, Hornets 86:** At Dallas, Dirk Nowitzki scored 28 points, including a key jumper and two free throws in the final minute, and the Mavericks held on to beat the team with the worst record in the Western Conference.

The Mavericks have won seven of eight. Nowitzki, who's been bothered by a sore right hamstring, had 13 points in the final quarter.

In Tuesday's early game:

**Grizzlies 99, Warriors 97:** At Memphis, Tenn., Mike Miller stole a pass by Jason Ricchardson, then hit two free throws with 10.4 seconds left, and the Grizzlies held off Golden State.

## NBA scoreboard

### Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division	P	GB
Boston	29	509
Philadelphia	26	421
New Jersey	25	439
New York	24	421
Washington	23	421
Orlando	22	421
Charlotte	21	421
Atlanta	20	421
Florida	19	421
Indiana	18	421
Pittsburgh	17	421
Cleveland	16	421
Detroit	15	421
Chicago	14	421
San Antonio	13	421
Memphis	12	421
San Diego	11	421
Portland	10	421
Seattle	9	421
Minnesota	8	421
Utah	7	421
Phoenix	6	421
Sacramento	5	421
Golden State	4	421

### Western Conference

Pacific Division	P	GB
San Antonio	29	509
Phoenix	28	509
Sacramento	27	509
Golden State	26	509
Portland	25	509
Seattle	24	509
Minnesota	23	509
Utah	22	509
Phoenix	21	509
Sacramento	20	509
Golden State	19	509
Portland	18	509
Seattle	17	509
Minnesota	16	509
Utah	15	509
Phoenix	14	509
Sacramento	13	509
Golden State	12	509
Portland	11	509
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# Ankiel shaky in second spring session

The Associated Press

Just days after he had batters flailing, it was Rick Ankiel who was struggling.

The St. Louis Cardinals left-hander threw just three strikes in 26 batting practice pitches Monday, a big drop-off from Friday, when he faced hitters for the first time in spring training and stymied hitters in a 40-pitch session.

Ankiel refused to place too much importance on his trouble finding the plate.

"I'm a little frustrated, but I have to think positive," Ankiel said from training camp in Jupiter, Fla.

Trying to earn a spot on the staff, he had looked steady in earlier outings. But he couldn't match that Monday.

"He was a little out of whack, but he wasn't missing by much," Cardinals manager Tony La Russa said. "That happens to a lot of pitchers. It isn't anything that we are worried about."

Ankiel arrived in 2000 at age 19 with a mid-90s fastball and a nasty curve that then-teammate Mark McGwire nicknamed the "snapdragon."

He earned 11 victories and recorded more than a strikeout per inning before badness and an elbow injury derailed his career for nearly three seasons.

During the 2000 playoffs, he threw nine wild pitches and walked four batters in four innings. Then came two elbow injuries, the second requiring reconstructive surgery that forced him out for a year.

Ankiel appeared in five late-season games last year and earned his first victory since early in the 2001 season. La Russa briefly considered him for the postseason roster, but the Cardinals reached the World Series without him.

Their run ended when they were swept in four straight by the Boston Red Sox.

Also, closer Jason Irthinghausen, who had hip joint surgery in the offseason, threw batting practice for 15 minutes. Outfielder



Cardinals pitcher Rick Ankiel struggled from the mound on Monday after a solid outing last Friday.

Larry Walker, who has been nursing a sore back, took part in drills and batting practice.

At Tampa, Fla., the Yankees announced Tuesday that Randy Johnson will miss his first scheduled spring training start on Thursday because of tightness in his left calf.

The problem is not considered serious, and the left-hander is expected to be ready for what would have been his second start on Tuesday.

"I'm not concerned about him ... not at all," Yankees owner George Steinbrenner said.

Johnson first experienced tightness in the calf last week, and the injury recurred during fielding drills Monday.

"This is not that big of a deal," Johnson said. "If I had to pitch today, I could have."

Meanwhile, Gary Sheffield said

he isn't interested in extending his contract with the New York Yankees.

The slugging right fielder is in the second season of a \$39 million, three-year contract. The Yankees have a \$13 million option for the 2007 season, and Sheffield wants to wait for that contract to run out before considering a new one.

"I don't want one," Sheffield said Monday. "When this is over, that's it. When this deal is done, I don't look past it. I can't predict if somebody is going to want me."

New York closer Mariano Rivera is also working his way back. He threw 43 pitches in his first batting practice session Monday, and could pitch in a spring training game next week.

At Fort Myers, Fla., Red Sox right-hander Wade Miller, who hasn't thrown off a mound since

last August because of a rotator cuff injury, long-tossed from 210 feet.

He expects to throw an abbreviated bullpen session Tuesday.

"They want to take it slow, they don't want to rush me," Miller said. "So in the back of their minds, the safest thing is probably starting the season on the DL and getting some work in down here."

Meanwhile, third baseman Bill Mueller is well ahead of schedule as he recovers from arthroscopic surgery on his right knee. He expected to play in exhibition games around March 10.

At Clearwater, Fla., Phillies learned Tuesday that right-hander Vicente Padilla will be sidelined for two weeks after an MRI on Monday confirmed he has tripped tendinitis.

He missed two months of the

2004 season with the same injury. The 27-year-old is scheduled to be Philadelphia's No. 2 starter, but will need a speedy recovery if he is to pitch in the opening series against the Washington Nationals.

If Padilla isn't ready, Gavin Floyd, Philadelphia's top pitching prospect, has the inside track to replace him in the rotation.

At Dunedin, Fla., Toronto manager John Gibbons said the Blue Jays will carry 12 pitchers this season, and only one spot is still open in the bullpen.

Billy Koch, Scott Schoeneweis, Jason Frasor, Kerry Ligtenberg, Brandon League and closer Justin Speier have already locked up relief positions.

The Blue Jays also learned that left-hander Ted Lilly (tendinitis in his left shoulder) could start throwing as early as Sunday.

At Peoria, Ariz., injury-prone Mariners outfielder Chris Snelling will undergo surgery Wednesday to repair a torn cartilage in his left knee. He's expected to be out of action for six weeks.

Snelling tore a ligament in the same knee during the 2001 season and missed the entire 2004 season because of operations on his right hand and wrist.

At Tempe, Ariz., newly appointed Angels closer Frankie Rodriguez finally arrived at spring training after resolving visa problems in his native Venezuela.

Rodriguez, 23, inherited the role from longtime closer Troy Percival, who signed with the Detroit Tigers.

At Surprise, Ariz., Pedro Astacio and Ricardo Rodriguez, pitchers the Texas Rangers hope will be in their starting rotation, threw scoreless innings in the first intrasquad game of the spring.

Rodriguez's season ended in July last year when his right elbow was broken by a line drive.

Astacio, a 35-year-old right-hander with one start since shoulder surgery in 2003, signed as a free agent. He threw 13 pitches, allowing only a one-out double to outfielder Ramon Nivar.

He got his outs on a grounder and two flyballs.

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# Chaney won't coach Temple in A-10 tournament

## Hall of Famer extends self-imposed ban stemming from injury to St. Joe's player

BY DAN GELSTON

The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — John Chaney extended his suspension by banning himself from the Temple sidelines for the Atlantic 10 tournament.

The Hall of Famer continued a week of apologies and punishments Monday when he announced he won't return after the school's three-game suspension ends with the close of the regular season.

"I believe the fair thing is for me not to coach during the Atlantic 10 championship tournament in Cincinnati," the 73-year-old Chaney said in a statement.

Chaney first suspended himself for one game and then had the school extend it to three games over his ordering rough play from one of his players in a recent game that resulted in an injury to senior John Bryant of Saint Joseph's.

If the Owls reach the A-10 championship game, there's a chance they could play the Hawks again.

"Now, when we go to our championship, it will be one less distraction," Atlantic 10 Commissioner Linda Bruno said Monday. "Maybe, but Chaney vs. the Hawks seems far from over. Saint



Chaney

Joseph's officials have refused to comment, only offering a tersely worded statement Saturday that said "a line was crossed."

Phil Martelli, the quick-quipped Hawks coach, has refused to comment and declined to participate in Monday's A-10 coaches' teleconference — the same one on which Chaney last week threatened to take action if the Hawks continued setting what he thought were illegal screens.

Chaney followed through on his threat, using Nehemiah Ingram to "send a message," Ingram fouled out in four minutes, including the hit on Bryant that left the senior sprawled on the court for several minutes. An MRI later revealed he had a broken arm that ended his season and college career.

Chaney had apologized to Bryant and his family and offered to pay his medical bills. Chaney on Monday apologized again in a statement to Bryant, both schools and the conference.

"Last week, my words and actions were wrong, wrong, wrong," he said.

"I never intended — nor did any of my players intend — for anyone to be injured, regardless of what may have been emotionally before, during and after the game," Chaney said. "But the unfortunate fact is that John Bryant was injured. I have taken full responsibility for my words and actions, and have apologized from my heart."

Bruno said there were no plans to take action against Ingram, who apologized after Saturday's game.

Chaney is still coaching the Owls at practice, though he won't attend any games. Assistant Dan Leibovitz is coaching the team. The Owls (14-11, 10-6) clinched a tie for second place in the Atlantic 10 East Division. A Temple win or a Fordham loss will earn the Owls a first-round bye in the conference tournament.

A Temple spokesman did not know if Chaney would be allowed to coach in the postseason. The Owls could earn an automatic bid to the NCAA tournament by winning the A-10 title. Even if the Owls lost their last three games, they would finish with a .500 record and be eligible for the NIT.

Bruno said it would be up to



AP

Temple assistant Dan Leibovitz, above, who is coaching the Owls during John Chaney's absence, guided the team to a 61-48 win over Massachusetts on Saturday. Chaney is still coaching the Owls in practice.

Chaney or Temple to decide if the coach should continue in the postseason.

Chaney avoids another distraction in returning to Cincinnati for the conference tournament. Last

month, Chaney scolded the people of Ohio, the state that helped President Bush win re-election with 20 electoral votes, saying, "It's not the people I hate, it's what they did that I hate."

# Not all schools give NCAA report high marks

## New formula creates accountability for academic progress of college athletes

BY MICHAEL MAROT

The Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — The NCAA had barely released its first report on schools' academic progress rates when the complaints began.

"We'd be remiss if we didn't express at least some concern that there are any number of flaws in this methodology," Oklahoma athletic director Joe Castiglione said.

The NCAA wants to hold schools more accountable for academic progress of student-athletes with a formula that tracks eligibility and retention. According to the report released Monday, half of the 328 Division I schools have at least one team that could face sanctions.

Programs can lose scholarships for one year, no team can lose more than 10 percent of what it offers.

"This represents the implementation of the most far-reaching academic reform in decades," NCAA President Myles Brand said. "It holds schools accountable for the performance of their student-athletes."

The new calculation generates a score between 0 and 1,000; penalties are assessed beginning with teams that drop below 925.

The number is determined by a points formula that rewards long-term eligibility and retention of student-athletes. Pro-

grams can lose points when athletes transfer, drop out, leave for the pros or become academically ineligible while still at the school.

Under the formula, athletes receive one point each semester for staying academically eligible and another point for staying in school. For instance, a perfect score for a 13-member basketball team at a semester school would be 52.

The total number of points a team actually receives is divided by the maximum possible total to get a percentage, which is converted to the 1000-point scale. No team can lose more than 10 percent of what it offers.

Some teams below the cutoffline will not be penalized because of a statistical adjustment that will help eliminate anomalies for teams with fewer athletes. Others can apply for a waiver.

At Oklahoma, the baseball, wrestling and men's and women's indoor track teams scored lower than the 925 point mark.

"They're going to get a lot of waivers," said Gerald Gurney, Oklahoma's associate athletic director for academic affairs. "Any system that creates such a bureaucracy that you have huge numbers of waivers and very few people understand, you have a problem."

At Maryland-Baltimore Coun-

## NCAA issues report card to sports teams

According to the NCAA's new measurement of student-athletes known as the Academic Progress Rate (APR), 7.2 percent of the 5,720 Division I men's and women's sports teams could fall below the 925-point outline — equivalent to a 50 percent graduation rate.

### Average APR for sports with more than 200 teams not requiring changes

#### Men's sports

961 Golf
955 Tennis

923 Football
923 Basketball

#### Women's sports

970 Golf
970 Soccer
967 Tennis
965 Volleyball
964 Softball
956 Basketball

925 outline

Source: NCAA

Football
Men's basketball
Baseball

### Percentage of teams with an APR below 925

29%
19%
23%

### Average APR comparison Public (Private)

913 (949)
912 (945)
910 (948)

925 outline

AP

of men's basketball programs could face scholarship losses.

Football, baseball and men's basketball were the only sports with averages below the 925-point cutoff. Baseball teams averaged 922, while football and men's basketball were at 923.

The most prominent programs that appeared in trouble were the men's basketball teams at Fresno State and Baylor. Fresno State received a 611, while Baylor scored 647 — a figure affected by the transfer of several players from the 2003 shooting death of Patrick Denny. Only one of those players remains on the team.

"If it were necessary to consider a waiver, we would do so," Baylor athletic director Ian McCaw said. "Hopefully at this point, our program is in good academic condition, and it won't become an issue for us."

McCaw also said he wouldn't contest the numbers that were mailed to schools last week.

Some numbers appeared inaccurate to university leaders, and there appeared to be more problems with the track calculations.

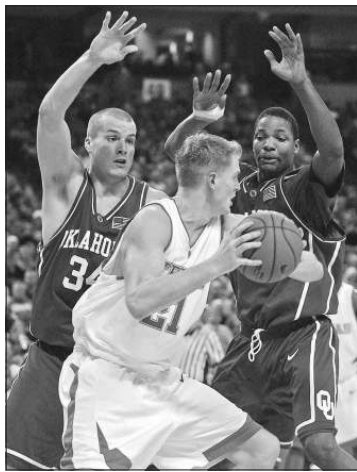
Houston's women's cross-country team and the men's indoor track teams at Eastern Michigan and Seton Hall all scored zero.

NCAA officials acknowledged during the conference call that errors might have occurred or there might be just one athlete on those teams.

Schools can submit amended forms in March, with results expected to be released in April.

Associated Press writer Jeff Latzke in Oklahoma contributed to this report.

# Sooners put Longhorns on the hot seat



**TEXAS:** Jason Kutz is impeded by Oklahoma's Kevin Bookout, left, and Johnnie Gilbert during the Sooners' 74-58 victory in Austin on Monday. **TEXAS (19-9)** is 8-7 in the Big 12 and 1-4 against ranked teams.

## NCAA bid no longer a sure thing for Texas

The Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — With a rugged win over a tough rival, No. 20 Oklahoma earned an extra day of rest in the postseason.

For the Texas Longhorns, the Sooners' 74-58 victory Monday night means more worrying about where their postseason will take them.

Lawrence McKenzie scored 16 points as the Sooners muscled past the Longhorns for their fifth straight win in a game that featured the physical play typical of one of the Big 12's most intense rivalries.

"This is our best road win for sure," Oklahoma coach Kelvin Sampson said. "McKenzie's saved us a lot of nights."

Oklahoma (22-6, 11-4) clinched a bye in the first round of the Big 12 tournament and stayed within a game of conference leader Kansas. David Godbold added 14 points for the Sooners.

"I feel good about this team right now," Oklahoma center Johnnie Gilbert said. "We're just playing on a high right now."

The Longhorns can finish no worse than 500 in league play, but are just 5-6 over the past five

weeks since losing P.J. Tucker, their best player, for the season because of academic problems.

Texas is 1-4 against ranked opponents and ends the regular season on the road against the team they beat, No. 8 Oklahoma State. That was Tucker's last game.

"It's disappointing," coach Rick Barnes said. "I think we all know we're at the point in time we need eight guys to show up to play. We had half the guys so that."

Sampson knows how tenuous the NCAA tournament situation is for Texas. Like the Sooners last year, Texas has had injuries deplete its lineup.

"We were 8-8 last year and we didn't get in," Sampson said.

Then, he all but lobbied for his rival as he left the postgame interviews.

"I hope they go. They deserve to go," he said. "They've just had bad luck."

Oklahoma beat Texas with power on the boards and speed in transition. The Sooners dominated the rebounding 39-29 and scored 23 points off 15 Texas turnovers.

"I don't think there's any question they're a more athletic team," Barnes said. "It got into a jumping contest at times and they got more possessions."

Defensively, the Sooners locked down Longhorns guard Daniel Gibson for most of the game, denying him drives to the basket and

neutralizing him as a three-point shooter until late in the game.

Gibson, one of top freshmen in the country, led Texas with 16 points, but his five turnovers matched his assists and he was just 4-of-14 shooting.

Oklahoma established control midway through the first half with 13-0 run and led 39-29 at halftime.

Another Sooners run to open the second half sent the Longhorns scrambling to catch up the rest of the game.

**No. 12 Gonzaga 87, N. Colorado 60:** At Spokane, Wash., Ronny Turiaf scored 22 points and Gonzaga wrapped up its regular season with its 10th consecutive victory.

Gonzaga (23-4) went 13-0 in the new McCarthy Athletic Center this season, and has a 25-game home winning streak, second-longest in the nation to Oklahoma State's 28.

Turiaf, playing his final home game, added eight rebounds for Gonzaga, which is 37-0 at home when ranked.

The Bulldogs, who won the West Coast Conference, next play in the semifinals of the league tournament on Sunday at Santa Clara.

Kirk Archibue had 17 points for Northern Colorado (8-20), a Division I independent, which shot 33 percent, including 2-for-20 from three-point range.

## Air Force handles San Diego St.

The Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Antoine Hood scored 17 of his 20 points in the second half and Jacob Burtchsi added 15 points to lead Air Force to a 77-57 victory over San Diego State on Monday night.

Air Force (17-11, 8-5 Mountain West) hit 13 three-pointers, including three straight in a key second-half stretch. The Falcons attempted 29 three-pointers and finished with more than 10 converted threes for the 12th time this season.

Air Force struggled from the field in the first half, but shot 63 percent in the second half. The Arzecs, who led 33-30 at halftime, shot just 27.3 percent (6-for-22) in the final 20 minutes.

Hood was 8-for-12 from the floor, including two

three-pointers, and six Falcons made three-point shots. Nick Welch finished with 13 points and Tim Keller had 12 to move into 12th place on Air Force's career scoring list with 1,092 points. Keller also played in his 113th game to become the Falcons' career leader.

Matt Thomas had a career-high 20 points for San Diego State (10-16, 4-9), which lost its fifth straight game.

Air Force made three straight three-pointers to take a 55-47 lead with 8:24 remaining in the game. The Arzecs did not get closer than eight points for the rest of the game.

Air Force hosts Wyoming on Saturday in its regular-season finale.



**Air Force's Nick Welch had 13 points on 5-of-10 shooting on Monday night.**

## Blockage: BC defeated for second time in 3 games

BLOCKAGE, FROM BACK PAGE

"They came in here, and it was men against boys," said BC's Craig Smith who scored 22 points but was the only BC player in double figures.

The Eagles won their first 20 games and attained their highest ranking ever — No. 3 before losing two of their past three games.

Another sellout crowd came to say goodbye to the senior lane, as Heisman Trophy winner Doug Flutie jammed with the band, playing the drums on "Johnny B. Goode."

But even with a chance to clinch the conference title, BC barely put up a fight.

Smith hit a jumper in the lane to make it 34-32 with 17:38 left. But Pittsburgh scored the next 11 points, getting consecutive putbacks.

With 5:47 left and BC trailing 59-45, Smith airballed one free throw, then and meekly rolled his second off the back of the rim.

And that convinced the Conte Forum crowd to head home to beat the oncoming blizzard.

## Union, NHL governors hold separate meetings

BY IRA PODELL

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — If there are cracks within the players' association, they weren't evident Tuesday when the rank and file met for the first time since the NHL season was cancelled.

"The so-called splinter faction in the union that is going in a different direction has been drummed up by a lot of media members and people hoping a deal gets done," St. Louis defenseman Chris Pronger said. "I can unequivocally say everyone is on board and understands the issues better."

The meeting lasted about three hours on Tuesday after beginning a night earlier with a dinner.

While more than 150 of the NHL's 700-plus players met in Toronto, the league's board of governors — representing all 30 teams — gathered in New York at the same hotel where commissioner Gary Bettman imposed the lockout in September and wiped out the entire season two weeks ago.

Both meetings were expected to be informational, providing updates on what happened in the failed negotiations the past 5½ months. Union leaders scheduled another meeting for Wednesday in Toronto with player agents.

The board of governors meeting was the first since the start of the lockout. Alternate governors, comprised of general managers

and other executives, were also present in Manhattan.

Wayne Gretzky, the managing partner of the Phoenix Coyotes, was absent because he was with his ill mother in Ontario.

Gretzky and Pittsburgh Penguins player-owner Mario Lemieux took part in the last bargaining session with the union on Feb. 19 — three days after the season was wiped out — in an effort to uncanceled the season. But they left disappointed that a deal wasn't in place.

Disunity among the governors was expected to take place between hard-line owners who want a salary cap with a link between league revenues and player costs,

and those who just want a reasonable salary in place that won't allow for the NHL to get back on the ice next season.

In the final week before the season was canceled, owners agreed to drop their demand for linkage. In return, the union agreed to accept a salary cap but the sides failed to agree on a number.

There is no telling when players and owners will sit down at the bargaining table. The NHL would like to get talks started as quickly as possible so an agreement can be reached in time for the draft to be held in June.

The union doesn't see much incentive to rush back into negotiations since the players aren't due to be paid again until October.

## SPORTS



Two athletic trainers tell investigators they were sexually assaulted by a CU assistant football coach, Page 27

# Blockage in the Big East



Pittsburgh's Levon Kendall (14) refuses to let Boston College's Nate Doornekamp (13) control a rebound during the Panthers' 72-50 victory on Monday night. The Panthers outrebounded the Eagles 49-27 and outshot them 48 percent to 31 percent in their sixth consecutive win over BC.

## Pitt prevents BC from winning conference title

BY JIMMY GOLEN  
The Associated Press

BOSTON — It's hard to tell which was the biggest problem for Boston College: Bad shooting, bad rebounding or bad karma.

No. 5 BC blew a chance to clinch the top seed in its final Big East tournament when it got trounced by No. 24 Pittsburgh 72-50 on Monday night. The result was all too familiar for the Eagles, who have been pariahs in the league since deciding to leave for the Atlantic Coast Conference: Their football team also squandered a Big East title when it got blown out in its last conference home game.

"This game was extremely important to [Pittsburgh]. But it was important to us, too," BC coach Al Skinner said. "We had something to gain here. The motivation for them was fine, but that's no reason we should have allowed something like this to occur."

BC (23-3, 12-3 Big East) will still win the conference outright or share it if with a victory over Rutgers on Saturday. No. 15 Connecticut, which is a half-game behind BC, plays Georgetown on Wednesday and No. 13 Syracuse on Saturday.

Pittsburgh (19-7, 9-6) had been ranked as high as 10th in the AP poll this year, but three



Pittsburgh's Antonio Graves (22) had 13 points and five rebounds on Monday. The Panthers are in fifth place, the last spot for a first-round bye in the Big East tournament.

straight losses — the past two at home — had knocked it from 17th to 24th. That changed Pitt from a team worried about its NCAA seeding to one in danger of missing the tourna-

ment completely.

The Panthers hold the fifth and last spot for a first-round bye. They will finish the regular season at Notre Dame on Saturday.

"This is the real Pittsburgh team right here. That's really how we play," guard Carl Krauser said. "Everyone knows the Pittsburgh team is tough."

John DeGroat had eight points and six rebounds in 10 second-half minutes to help Pitt beat BC for the sixth straight time — including three in the conference tournament. "They've got our number," BC forward Jared Dudley said. "Pittsburgh's done it to us the last couple of years. They like playing against us."

The loss had a similar feel to the BC football finale, when the Eagles lost to Syracuse 47-17 to fall from the lucrative Fiesta Bowl to the Continental Tire Bowl. Like that one, this wasn't even close.

Antonio Graves had 13 points and five rebounds; Chris Taft had 12 and eight, Chevon Troutman had 11 and seven, and Krauser had 10 and eight for Pitt. The Panthers outrebounded the Eagles 49-27 — 27-10 in the second half — and outshot them 48 percent to 31 percent.

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Temple coach Chaney bans himself from Atlantic 10 tournament

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Gund's final game as Cavs' owner has a familiar feel in Cleveland

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Wild outing a setback for Cardinals' Ankiel; spring training roundup

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## NCAA issues report measuring academic standing

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